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Vol. I

THE HISTORY OF BENGAL

VOLUME I

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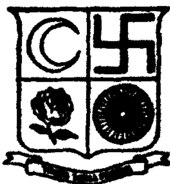
EDITED BY

R. C. MAJUMDAR,

M.A., PH.D., F.R.A.S.B.

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FOREWORD

BY

THE HISTORY OF BENGAL PUBLICATION COMMITTEE

THE idea of writing a comprehensive History of Bengal on modern scientific lines may be traced back to 1912 when Lord Carmichael, the first Governor of the Bengal Presidency, took the initiative and invited MM. Haraprasad Śāstrī to prepare a scheme. It was proposed to publish the history in three volumes dealing respectively with the Hindu, Muslim and British periods. Several meetings were held in the Government House, Calcutta, but what became of this plan and how far it was matured are not definitely known. Some years later, the late Raja Prafulla Nath Tagore, the grandson of the famous Kali Krishna Tagore, volunteered to pay the entire cost of such a publication, and invited the late Mr. Rakhaldas Banerji to draw up a plan along with some other well-known scholars of his time. Several meetings were held in the house of the Raja, but ultimately nothing came out of it.

Ever since the foundation of the University of Dacca, it was felt that the University should take up the task of preparing a History of Bengal as early as practicable. This idea received an impetus from Sir Jadunath Sarkar, who, in the course of a lecture delivered at the University about the middle of July 1933, emphasised that a History of Bengal on modern scientific lines was long overdue, and that this University, standing as it does in the very heart of an ancient and important seat of Bengal culture, should in the fitness of things take up the work. Sir Jadunath promised his whole-hearted support and active co-operation in this enterprise.

The scheme received a new impetus from Mr. (now Sir) A. F. Rahman, when he joined the University as Vice-Chancellor in July 1934. In his first convocation address next month he emphasised the need of commencing the work, and in his second convocation speech, in July 1935, he announced that some preliminary work had already been done.

By the end of August 1935, the scheme took a more definite shape, as Professor R. C. Majumdar, Head of the Department of History, who had so long been pre-occupied with his own research work on the history of Ancient Indian Colonies in the Far East, was now free to take up the work.

On the 13th of September 1935, the Vice-Chancellor convened a general meeting at his house, of local citizens and University teachers interested in the subject, and a Committee called the History of Bengal Publication Committee was formed at the meeting composed of the following gentlemen :—

1. A. F. Rahman, Esq., Vice-Chancellor, Dacca University —Chairman
2. Dr. N. K. Bhattasali—Secretary
3. Dr. S. N. Bhattacharyya—Jt. Secretary
4. Professor R. C. Majumdar
5. Sir Jadunath Sarkar
6. Dr. K. R. Quanungo
7. Hakim Habibur Rahman
8. Mr. Sharafuddin

The Committee formally met immediately after the general meeting, and its first task was the framing of a tentative Scheme of Work for the consideration of the Executive Council of the University. Mr. (now Sir) A. F. Rahman very generously announced at the inaugural meeting of the Committee a donation of Rupees one thousand in memory of his deceased mother, and Dr. K. R. Quanungo, Reader in History, promised on behalf of the Friends' Library, Kanungopara, Chittagong, a contribution of Rupees fifty.

The Committee passed several resolutions, one requesting the Executive Council to undertake to find funds for the publication of the proposed History, and to make an initial grant of Rs. 1,000/- and another requesting Professor Majumdar to take the necessary steps for the furtherance of the scheme.

In pursuance of the latter resolution of the Committee, Professor Majumdar wrote to the Vice-Chancellor on the 14th September, 1935, requesting him to place the draft scheme before the Executive Council and to move the Council to provide the necessary funds for the publication of the proposed History, and to make an initial grant of Rupees one thousand for meeting the preliminary expenses.

The scheme was recommended by the Academic Council and in a meeting held on 19th December, 1935, the Executive Council finally approved of the entire scheme, financial as well as administrative, and resolved as follows :—

"That the financial and administrative schemes for the publication of the History of Bengal as a Dacca University publication as per Appendix c be approved, that for the purpose of meeting preliminary expenses for the publication of the History, a grant of Rs. 1,000/-

be now made out of the University funds and that the University undertakes to find funds that might be necessary, in addition to the donation raised, for the publication of the History on the definite understanding that the proprietary right of the History should solely vest in the University of Dacca."

It is not necessary to reproduce the entire scheme, but the following extracts may be quoted to give an idea of the administrative arrangement:

"SCHEME FOR A HISTORY OF BENGAL

1. It shall be published by and at the expense of the University of Dacca under its general superintendence and control.

2. The History shall be divided into three volumes as follows:—

Vol. I. The Hindu Period.

Vol. II. Pre-Mughal Period (1200-1576 A.D.).

Vol. III. Mughal Period (1576-1757 A.D.).

3. Dr. R. C. Majumdar shall be the editor of the first volume and Sir Jadunath Sarkar should be requested to edit the second and the third volumes.

4. The management of the preparation and publication of the proposed History shall be entrusted to a committee to be called 'History of Bengal Publication Committee' composed as follows:—

1. The Vice-Chancellor—Chairman.
2. Dr. N. K. Bhattasali—Secretary.
3. Dr. S. N. Bhattacharyya—Jt. Secretary.

Other members—4. Sir Jadunath Sarkar and 5. Dr. R. C. Majumdar, Editors; 6. Dr. K. R. Quanungo; 7. Hakim Habibur Rahman; 8. Mr. Sharafuddin. The Committee shall have power to co-opt other members."

In the second meeting of the History Publication Committee held on 16th February, 1936, a fund called the History of Bengal Publication Fund was created with the nucleus grant of Rs. 1,000/- made by the Executive Council, and appeals for financial help were also made. In response to these appeals, Sir P. C. Ray made a donation of Rs. 1,000/- and the Government of Bengal offered a similar donation of Rs. 1,000/- to the Fund. Subsequently, the Executive Council sanctioned a sum of Rs. 10,000/- for the printing and publication of the work.

In course of the long period of composition and completion of the work, several noteworthy changes took place in the personnel of

the Committee as well as in the scheme of the work. Dr. N. K. Bhattasali resigned the office of Secretary on 25. 5. 36, and Dr. S. N. Bhattacharyya was appointed in his place. Dr. A. F. Rahman resigned the office of Chairman on 8. 4. 37, and Dr. R. C. Majumdar was appointed in his place. Professor R. C. Majumdar resigned the office on 29. 6. 42 and Professor M. Hasan succeeded him. Mr. Sharafuddin ceased to be a member of the Committee, and Professor S. K. De, Dr. M. Shahidullah, Dr. M. I. Borah, and Dr. D. C. Ganguly were added as members to the Committee. Dr. D. C. Ganguly was appointed Joint Secretary on 19. 9. 40.

Some changes in the scheme of work, particularly in the distribution of chapters to different scholars, were also made from time to time. The names of the writers finally selected are mentioned in the Table of Contents under each chapter. The Committee convey their thanks to all of them for their valuable co-operation.

Though the work was initiated early in 1936, its progress was delayed for several reasons, to which reference has been made by the editor in the Preface. It is a matter of great satisfaction to all concerned that in spite of all difficulties and handicaps the first part of the work is at last completed and published.

The Committee take this opportunity of expressing their gratitude to Sir Jadunath Sarkar, C.I.E., for commending the work to the University and for accepting the onerous duties of editorship of Volumes II and III of the history. They desire to offer their grateful thanks to Sir A. F. Rahman, for his services in regard to the initiation and promotion of the work during the period of his Vice-Chancellorship. The Committee feel especially indebted to Professor R. C. Majumdar, who, in spite of his heavy administrative duties as Vice-Chancellor, accepted the editorship of Volume I, contributed to it so many chapters, and saw the book through the Press. His energy and enterprise alone have made the early publication of the work possible.

The Committee take this opportunity to convey their thanks to Sir P. C. Ray for his very generous donation for the publication of this work.

The thanks of the Committee are also due to various persons and institutions for the help rendered by them in the publication of this work. Rao Bahadur K. N. Dikshit, M.A., F.R.A.S.B., Director General of Archaeology in India has most generously lent free of charge the blocks preserved in his Department and also supplied prints of negatives at the usual cost. With his kind permission, the Superintendent, Archaeological Section, the Indian Museum and the Superintendent, Archaeological Survey, Eastern Circle, Calcutta, have

rendered all facilities for the study of the sculptures and taking photos wherever necessary. We take this opportunity to offer the Director General and the members of his Department our most grateful thanks for the very valuable services rendered by them. The authorities of the Asutosh Museum of Indian Art, Calcutta University, Vaṅgīya Sāhitya Parishat, Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Indian Society of Oriental Art, Dacca Museum, Greater India Society and Indian Science News Association, and Messrs. O. C. Gangoly, N. K. Bhattasali, J. N. Banerjea and S. K. Saraswati have lent us free of charge blocks and photos in their possession and we offer our heartfelt thanks for the readiness with which they have offered their co-operation.

We wish we could say the same thing about the Varendra Research Society at Rajshahi, the only institution in the whole of India from which we have failed to receive the help and sympathy we had every reason to expect, in view of the past history of the institution and its illustrious founder who has rendered yeoman's service to the advancement of the study of the History of Bengal. This Society alone possesses all the illustrated Buddhist manuscripts, definitely known to be written in Ancient Bengal, whose whereabouts are known at present. It is hardly necessary to point out that the coloured illustrations in these MSS. are necessary for a proper study of the art of painting in Ancient Bengal. In spite of repeated requests, the Society refused to lend them to us and only gave permission to consult them at Rajshahi. The Vice-Chancellor (who was also the Editor) personally saw the President of the Society and explained that it was impossible to prepare tri-colour blocks at Rajshahi and offered the guarantee of either the Dacca University, or the University of Calcutta (which he hoped to secure from its Vice-Chancellor) for the safe-keeping and return of the MSS. if they were sent for a few days to Calcutta. This the Society persistently refused to do with the result that the History of Bengal, containing the first comprehensive treatment of the art of painting, had to be published without those illustrations which have not yet seen the light of the day although the Society has been in possession of the MSS. for a quarter of a century. As regards photos of sculptures, the Society offered the use of eleven, already in their possession, only on payment of Rs. 50/- which amounted to the entire cost of their original preparation for the use of the Society. Without pursuing this unpleasant topic any further, it may be said that after prolonged correspondence two photos were lent free on condition that the "Dacca University would give to the Museum free of charge, in return, the blocks of these photographs prepared by them" and "acknowledge duly in the proposed work the courtesy

thus extended." While we take this opportunity to acknowledge the courtesy that we have received from the Varendra Research Society, Rajshahi, and thank them for their help, we cannot but regret that it was not forthcoming in a larger measure.

As it has not been possible to indicate under each illustration the source from which its photograph was obtained, a separate 'acknowledgement' list has been inserted for this purpose. It is to be definitely understood that the right of reproducing the illustrations is reserved by the persons, authorities and institutions who lent their blocks or photographs.

Finally, we wish to place on record our appreciation of the services rendered by the General Printers and Publishers Ltd., the printers of this volume. The Managing Director of this company Mr. S. C. Das, M.A., an ex-student of the Dacca University, has taken special care to see this volume through the Press and has spared no pains to expedite the publication in the face of exceptional difficulties. Our special thanks are due to him and to Mr. R. K. Ghoshal, M.A. who has not only revised the proofs and prepared the Index, but also made many valuable suggestions for improvement.

PREFACE

The genesis of the present work has been explained in the Foreword. The editor feels that he owes an explanation for the very long interval between the inception of the work and its publication. In view of the importance of the subject a few relevant facts may be mentioned which will also incidentally explain the changes made in the personnel of the writers referred to in the Foreword.

Shortly after the work was taken up we were denied the co-operation of Dr. N. K. Bhattasali, M.A., PH.D., who was the Secretary of the Publication Committee and had agreed to write the chapter on Art. It is unnecessary to discuss here the reasons which led Dr. Bhattasali to come to this decision, but the change of Secretary and the loss of a valuable contributor naturally caused dislocation of work and involved considerable delay in completing the preliminary steps. The chapter on Art was entrusted to the late Mr. N. G. Majumdar, who naturally desired to collect photos of select specimens of architecture and sculpture before commencing to write. This took up a long time as the specimens to be photographed were spread over a wide area. At last the photos were prepared and he took them with him in his ill-fated journey to the Indus Valley, as he hoped to be able to write the chapter in his leisure hours while on tour. The tragic circumstances under which he met his end in Sind are known to all. His death dealt a severe blow to our scheme, as most of the photos together with the notes prepared by him were irretrievably lost. In this predicament the editor invited two young scholars—Dr. Niharranjan Ray and Mr. Sarasi Kumar Saraswati—to write the chapter on Art, and they readily agreed to take up the work. But the preparation of a new set of photographs took up much time and caused considerable delay. We take this opportunity to pay our tribute of respect to the gifted archaeologist who had readily volunteered his valuable co-operation which, alas, was denied us by his sudden and tragic death.

When the chapter on Art was assigned to the late Mr. N. G. Majumdar he had to be relieved of the work already allotted to him and this involved re-allocation of a number of chapters. The new arrangement did not prove at all satisfactory, and most of these chapters had to be written by the editor himself. The sudden departure of one of the contributors for Europe, without any previous intimation, also involved more work for the editor, as no

competent scholar was found willing to take up the work at a short notice.

Even when most of the chapters were ready the editor was confronted with other difficulties. It was originally proposed to devote a whole chapter to the ethnology of Bengal, and a specialist on the subject was invited to write it. Repeated reminders, extending over a period of five or six years, were always followed by promises to send the contribution within a short period, but it was not received even when the printing of the volume had made considerable progress. As he never declined the task no substitute could be appointed. At last, in order to avoid the total suspension of the work at a time when in view of the abnormal circumstances every effort had to be made to expedite the printing, the editor had no other option but to write himself a brief note on the subject at the beginning of chapter xv. This chapter dealing with the social conditions of Ancient Bengal was also entrusted to a specialist on the subject. After a great deal of delay the promised contribution was received, but it dealt with pre-historic anthropology only and did not at all touch the real subject. Again, in order to avoid further delay in the publication, the editor undertook to write it himself with the co-operation of Dr. D. C. Ganguly, M.A., PH.D. and Dr. R. C. Hazra, M.A., PH.D. The former worked on the epigraphic and the latter on the literary data, and the materials collected by them were co-ordinated and put into proper form by the editor with certain additions. Special thanks are due to both these scholars for having agreed to undertake the work at such short notice.

Thus more than five years had passed before the volume could be sent to the Press. But three months after the printing had begun the declaration of war by Japan upset the normal life in Calcutta and considerably dislocated her business and industry. The printing press was seriously affected by the panicky evacuation of the city, and there was considerable delay before satisfactory progress in the work of printing could be resumed. In view of the abnormal situation no efforts were spared to expedite the printing, lest any fresh wave of panic should again suspend the work. Unfortunately, the Japanese air-raids on Calcutta in December last year again dislocated the business life of Calcutta when only the last four chapters remained to be printed. It reflects great credit upon the custodian of the printing establishment that in spite of considerable difficulties, these chapters were at last printed off. Faced with the contingency of having to postpone indefinitely the publication of the volume over which he had worked for more than six years, the editor decided to push up the printing at any cost, even at the risk of sacrificing quality to a certain extent. The proofs

could not be sent for final revision to the authors of the last three chapters and the editor had to undertake the sole responsibility of seeing them through the Press.

This somewhat long and tedious narrative is given here not only as an explanation of the long delay in the publication of the work, but also as an interesting record which might be of use to the future historian of the History of Bengal. For in view of the present state of our knowledge any exposition of the history of Ancient Bengal must be regarded as provisional; and as new evidence is continually and rapidly accumulating, it may be confidently hoped that the present work would turn out to be merely a precursor of many similar volumes which would be written at no distant date. The editor does not pretend to do anything more than laying the foundation on which more competent hands will build in future, till a suitable structure is raised which would be worthy of our motherland. The historian of that not very distant future may perhaps view with greater sympathy the pioneer efforts of his predecessor if he realises the difficulties under which the latter had to carry on his work, in addition to heavy administrative duties throughout the period.

The task of compiling a history of Ancient Bengal is by no means an easy one. The greater part of the subject is yet an untrodden field, and few have made any special study of such branches of it as art and religion, social and economic conditions, law and administration. These topics have been so far studied almost exclusively with reference to ancient India as a whole, but a regional study, strictly confined within the limits of the territory where the Bengali language is spoken, has not yet been seriously taken up by competent scholars. In respect of political history also, while much spade work has been done, no serious attempt has yet been made to reconstruct a continuous historical narrative as distinct from the collection and interpretation of a number of archaeological data. In many respects, therefore, the present volume breaks altogether new ground, and faults of both omission and commission are almost inevitable in such a case.

In writing this history we have strictly confined ourselves to the data definitely applicable to the geographical limits of Bengal, and any deviation from this rule has been duly noted.

An attempt has also been made to make the treatment as detached and scientific as possible. Where materials of study are lacking, we have chosen to leave a void rather than fill it up with the help of imaginary or unreliable matter. Many topics of interest and importance have, therefore, been altogether ignored or very imperfectly treated.

It is hardly necessary to recapitulate the difficulties which are inherent in a work of this kind or to explain the principles adopted in the preparation of this volume. The series of historical works published by the Cambridge University have been deliberately adopted as the standard and model of this work, and the following passage in the Preface to the First Volume of the *Cambridge Ancient History* admirably sums up our views and ideals :

"In a co-operative work of this kind, no editorial pains could avoid a certain measure of overlapping; and in fields where there is so much uncertainty and such wide room for divergencies of views, as in the first two volumes, overlapping must mean that occasionally different writers will express or imply different opinions. It has not been thought desirable to attempt to eliminate these differences, though they are often indicated or discussed. Such inconsistencies may sometimes be a little inconvenient for the reader's peace of mind, but it is better he should learn to take them as characteristic of the ground over which he is being guided than that he should be misled by a dogmatic consistency into accepting one view as authoritative and final.

"It will easily be understood that it is not possible to give chapter and verse for every statement or detailed arguments for every opinion, but it is hoped that the work will be found serviceable to professional students as well as to the general reader. The general reader is constantly kept in view throughout, and our aim is to steer a middle course between the opposite dangers, a work which only the expert could read or understand and one so 'popular' that serious students would rightly regard it with indifference."

It is a source of great pleasure to us that in spite of delays and difficulties, it has been found possible to bring out the first volume. The printing of the second volume has already made some progress, though in view of the abnormal situation prevailing in Calcutta, it is difficult to say when it will see the light of day.

On behalf of the Dacca University, and the Editorial Board, we wish to express our indebtedness to the various contributors for their whole-hearted co-operation in this project, even at a considerable personal inconvenience.

The editor acnowledges with pleasure the help he has received from his many friends and old pupils. Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri, M.A., PH.D., Carmichael Professor of Ancient Indian History and Culture, Calcutta University, not only offered many valuable suggestions, but helped the editor to tide over many difficulties that confronted him from time to time. Mr. Sarasi Kumar Saraswati, M.A., Lecturer, Calcutta University, has regularly assisted the editor in seeing the volume through the Press and taken immense pains in preparing photos, blocks and maps, and properly arranging these materials for publication. Mr. Pramode Lal Paul, M.A., Mr. A. Halim, M.A., and Mr. Kshitish Chandra Ray, M.A. prepared a bibliography of articles, published in oriental journals, for the use of the contributors. Mr. Subodh Chandra Banerji, M.A., Keeper of Manuscripts, Dacca

University Library, offered many valuable suggestions in writing the chapter on Social Conditions. Mr. Anil Chandra Mukherji has drawn the maps which are published in this volume. The editor conveys his thanks and expresses his indebtedness to these and all others who have helped him in any way in discharging his responsible duties.

The system of transliteration followed in the *Epigraphia Indica* has been adopted in this volume. In chapter XII ï and ü have been used to indicate the vowels *i* and *u*, not joined with any consonant. As regards Indian place-names, the system of spelling adopted in the *Imperial Gazetteer* has been generally followed, though there are some deviations in well-known cases. In writing modern place-names vowels have not been as a rule accentuated except in cases of find-spots of images and inscriptions. In these and similar instances, such as English derivatives from Sanskrit words (like Tantric, Puranic, Brahmanical *etc.*) it has not been possible to maintain a rigid uniformity, for in view of the fact that different practices are adopted even in standard works, and none of them can be regarded as definitely established, it has not been thought desirable or necessary to take meticulous care to change the spelling adopted by different contributors. Titles of books cited have been printed in italics, and a list of the abbreviations used for books, periodicals, places of publications *etc.* has been appended. Volumes have been indicated by Roman, and pages by Arabic, numerals, with a dot between the two, but without any words like Vol. or p ; pp. *etc.*

As copious footnotes giving full references to books and articles in periodicals have been added throughout the work, it has not been thought necessary to add a long bibliography at the end of the volume. Only a select bibliography is given containing a list of important works of a general nature and such other references as have been specially suggested by the writers of the different chapters.

Calcutta,
April 15, 1943.

R. C. MAJUMDAR

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We are indebted to the following persons and institutions for supplying blocks and photographs for the illustrations noted against each. No one is permitted to reproduce them without the permission of those authorities, the copyright in each case being reserved.

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(2) Dacca Museum:—Nos. 7, 9, 11, 13, 58-59, 65, 67, 77, 97, 99-101, 147 and 158.

(3) Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta:—Nos. 4-6, 37, 39 and 148.

(4) Indian Society of Oriental Art, Calcutta:—Nos. 183-190.

(5) Mr. O. C. Gangoly:—Frontispiece.

(6) Indian Science News Association and Dr. N. K. Bhattasali—Map of Van den Broucke.

II. PHOTOGRAPHS

(1) Archaeological Survey of India, Eastern Circle:—Nos. 12, 16, 21, 27, 35, 40, 42, 44, 47, 56, 62, 64, 69-70, 79-81, 85, 87-89, 92-93, 98, 102, 110, 115, 119-122, 125, 127-128, 131, 133, 134, 136, 140, 156, 163, 166, 172, 174-175, 179 and 182.

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(7) Mr. S. K. Saraswati:—Nos. 15, 17, 20, 34, 41, 46, 57, 75, 82, 111-113, 154, 157, 160 and 161.

Nos. 90 and 91 have been reproduced respectively from Pls. XXXVI and XLIII in James Fergusson's *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, Vol. II.

The map of 'India within the Ganges' from Ptolemy's Geography is reproduced from *The Early History of Bengal*, by F. J. Monahan.

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* The Index has been prepared by Mr. R. K. Ghoshal, M.A.

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Abbreviations, Indicating Present Location

A.M.—Asutosh Museum of Indian Art, Calcutta University, Calcutta.
D.M.—Dacca Museum.
I.M.—Indian Museum, Calcutta.
M.M.—Maldah Museum.
P.C.—Private Collection.
R.M.—Rajshahi Museum (Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi).
V.S.P.M.—Vaṅgīya Sāhitya Parishat Museum, Calcutta.

ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS

Page 49, f.n 1. Add: Kulaikuri CP. (G E. 120). (*Vangaśrī*, Vaiśākha, 1350 B.S., pp 415-21).

Page 49, f.n. 5. Add: The equivalent of the Gupta Year 188 current has been assumed to be 507-8 A.D. But, according to the theory of K. B. Pathak, the equivalent would be 506-7 A.D. (*IHQ*. VI. 47).

Page 60. Two Copper-plate Grants of Śaśāṅka were discovered, somewhere in the Midnapore district, about six years ago, and a short account of them with photographs and a tentative reading were published in a local paper (*Mādhavī*, Āshāḍha 1345 B.S., pp. 3-6). They remained, however, unknown to scholars till the editor of this volume happened to see them in course of a recent visit to Midnapore (April 23, 1943) and brought them down to Calcutta. They have not yet been cleaned and properly studied, but the portion already deciphered by Dr. D. C. Sircar and the editor shows that both of them record grants of land during the reign of Śaśāṅka. One of these Grants was made by the *sāmanta-mahārāja* Somadatta who was the governor of Daṇḍabhukti to which administrative unit Utkala-*deśa* was also attached. The second Grant was made by *mahāpratīhāra* Śubhakīrti, who also was the governor of Daṇḍabhukti-*deśa* under Śaśāṅka. Both the Grants were issued from the *adhikaraṇa* of Tāvīra. One of the inscriptions contains a date which is probably *saṁvat* 230 or 330, but the numerical symbol for hundreds, used in this record, has not been met with before, and the interpretation is, therefore, doubtful. The date of the record, when finally fixed, is likely to throw new light on the history of Śaśāṅka.

Page 137, para 2. The conclusion drawn from the Bāghāura Image Ins. is supported by a new inscription, engraved on an image of Gaṇeśa, recently discovered in the village of Nārāyanpur, in the Tippera district. A paper-rubbing of the inscription was brought to Dr. D. C. Sircar on April 25, 1943, and he has been able to read the whole of it without much difficulty. The inscription records that the image was set up in the 4th regnal year of *Mahārājādhirāja* Mahīpāladeva, by the merchant Buddhamitra, an inhabitant of Vilikandhaka in Samataṭa. Dr. Sircar is inclined to identify this village with Vilakīndaka mentioned in the Bāghāura Image Ins.

Page 148, ll. 4-5. The epithet "full moon in the clear sky of Vaṅga" is the result of a wrong reading of the text by the editor of this inscription. The correct reading is *śitāṁśu-vaṁśa* and not *sitāṅga-vaṅga*. The new reading, originally suggested by Paramananda Acharya in *Mayurbhanja Chronicle*, April 1942, has been verified by the editor of this volume.

Page 186. Add at end of footnote: For a critical discussion on the legend of Gopīchānd *cf. PTOC*. VI. 265 ff.

Page 670. Add at end of para 1: Two specific cases may be cited by way of illustrating the part played by the Bengalis in the ancient Indian colonisation in the Far East. In the first place, it appears from the Kalyāṇī Ins. that the settlement in Suvarṇabhūmi (Lower Burma) was apparently colonised from Bengal by the Golas (Gauḍas). Their name has become the Mon and Burmese appellation for all foreigners from the west (*IA*. 1894, p. 256; *Epigraphia Birmanica*, III. Part I, p. 185, f.n. 12). Secondly, two Sanskrit inscriptions found in Cambodia exhibit so completely all the peculiarities of the Gauḍa style, as defined by Daṇḍin and other rhetoricians (*infra* p. 302), that the great French scholar Georges Coedès, who edited them, has expressed the view that the records were composed by a Paṇḍit who either belonged to Bengal or was trained there (*Mélanges Sylvain Lévi*, p. 213).

ABBREVIATIONS

ABI. (*ABORI*).—Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona.

AGI.—Ancient Geography of India by Sir Alexander Cunningham.

Ain.—Ain-i-Akbari (if reference is to Persian text, the word "text" is added; if to Blochmann and Jarret's translation, "trans." is added).

Ait. Ar.—Aitareya Āraṇyaka.

AJV.—Sir Asutosh Mookerjee Silver Jubilee Volumes.—Vol. III, Orientalia. Published by Calcutta University.

An. SS.—Ānandāśrama Sanskrit Series.

AR.—See *RA*.

AS.—Archaeological Survey Reports of the different Circles. (The initial letter of the Circle is added within ordinary brackets).

AS.-Burma.—Archaeological Survey Report, Burma.

ASC.—Archaeological Survey Reports, by Sir A. Cunningham.

ASI.—Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India.

ASM.—Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India.

Auf.-*Cat*.—Catalogus Catalogorum by T. Aufrecht, Leipzig 1891.

Banerjea-*Icon*.—Development of Hindu Iconography by J. N. Banerjea, Calcutta University 1941.

BCL.-Cat.—Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts in Baroda Central Library.

Beal-*Life*.—The Life of Hiuen Tsang by the Shaman Hwui Li. Tr. by S. Beal. London 1911.

Beal-*Records*.—Si-yu-ki. Buddhist Records of the Western World. Tr. from the Chinese of Hiuen Tsang by S. Beal.

BEFEO.—Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient, Hanoi.

Belv.-*Lect*.—Lectures on Vedānta by S. K. Belvalkar.

Belv.-*Phil*.—History of Indian Philosophy by S. K. Belvalkar.

Belv.-*Systems*.—Systems of Sanskrit Grammar by S. K. Belvalkar.

Ben-SS.—Benares Sanskrit Series.

BG.—Bombay Gazetteer.

B. GS.-Cat.—Catalogue of Mss. in Gujarat, Sindh etc. by G. Bühler.

Bhandarkar-*List*.—A List of Inscriptions of Northern India (Appendix to *EI*.).

Bhandarkar-*Rep.*—Report on the Search for Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Bombay Presidency by Sir R. G. Bhandarkar.

Bhatt.-*Cat.*—Catalogue of Sculptures in the Dacca Museum by N. K. Bhattasali.

BI.—Bāṅgālār Itihāsa, Part I, 2nd ed. (in Bengali) by R. D. Banerji.

Bibl. Ind.—Bibliotheca Indica. Published by the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta.

Bod.-Cat.—Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library. Oxford, 1905.

BSOS.—Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, London.

BSS.—Bombay Sanskrit Series.

Bu-ston.—History of Buddhism by Bu-ston. Tr. E. Obermiller Heidelberg 1932.

Cal. SS.—Calcutta Sanskrit Series.

CCBM.—Catalogue of Coins in the British Museum, London.

CCIM.—Catalogue of Coins in the Indian Museum, Calcutta.

Chatterji-*Lang.*—The Origin and Development of the Bengali Language by Suniti Kumar Chatterji. Calcutta University 1926.

CHI.—Cambridge History of India.

CII.—Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum.

Cordier-*Cat.*—Catalogue du fonde Tibetain de la Bibliothéque Nationale by P. Cordier. Paris 1908.

CP.—Copper-plate (s).

CS.—Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series.

DB.—Dāyabhāga of Jīmūtavāhana (Pages refer to the English tr. by H. T. Colebrooke).

De-*Poetics.*—Sanskrit Poetics by S. K. De.

DG.-Phil.—History of Indian Philosophy by S. N. Dasgupta.

DHNI.—Dynastic History of Northern India by H. C. Ray.

DOT.—Dacca University Oriental Texts Series.

DR.—Dacca Review.

DUS.—Dacca University Studies.

E & D.—The History of Muhammadan India as told by its own Historians. Ed. Elliot and Dowson.

Edelst.—Edelsteinmine by A. Grünwedel. Petrograd 1914.

Egg.-*Cat.*—Catalogue of Sanskrit Mss. in the Library of the India Office, London, by J. Eggeling. London 1887.

EHB.—Early History of Bengal by F. J. Monahan.

EHBP.—The Early History of Bengal by Pramode Lal Paul. Calcutta 1939.

EHBR.—The Early History of Bengal by R. C. Majumdar. Dacca University 1924.

EHI.—The Early History of India by V. A. Smith.

EI.—Epigraphia Indica.

EISMS.—Eastern Indian School of Mediaeval Sculpture by R. D. Banerji. Delhi 1933.

Ep. Carn.—Epigraphia Carnatica.

ERE.—Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics.

Fa-hien.—A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms. Tr. J. Legge. Oxford 1886.

Foucher-*Icon*.—Études sur l'Iconographie Bouddhique de l'Inde d'apres des documents nouveaux, par A. Foucher. Paris 1900.

Gait.—A History of Assam by Sir Edward Gait.

GL.—Gauḍa-lekha-mālā (in Bengali) by Akshaya Kumar Maitreya.

GOS.—Gaekwad Oriental Series.

GP.—Gurjara-Pratīhāras by R. C. Majumdar (published in *JL*. x).

GR.—Gauḍa-rāja-mālā (in Bengali) by Ramaprasad Chanda.

GV.—Gauḍa-vaho of Vākpatirāja. Ed. S. P. Pandit.

HC.—Harsha-charita of Bāṇabhaṭṭa.

HC. Tr.—English tr. of *HC*. by E. B. Cowell and F. W. Thomas.

HK.—History of Kāmarūpa by K. L. Barua.

HNI.—History of North-Eastern India by Radhagovinda Basak. Calcutta 1934.

HSL.—Haraprasāda-saṁvardhana-lekhamālā (in Bengali). Published by *VSP*.

Hunter.—Statistical Account of Bengal by W. W. Hunter. 20 Vols.

IA.—Indian Antiquary, Bombay.

IB.—Inscriptions of Bengal, Vol. III, by N. G. Majumdar.

IC.—Indian Culture, Calcutta.

IHI.—An Imperial History of India in a Sanskrit Text, by K. P. Jayaswal.

IHQ.—Indian Historical Quarterly, Calcutta.

IMC.—see *CCIM*.

IMP.—Inscriptions of the Madras Presidency, by V. Rangacharya.

IP.—Indian Pandits in the Land of Snow by Sarat Chandra Das.

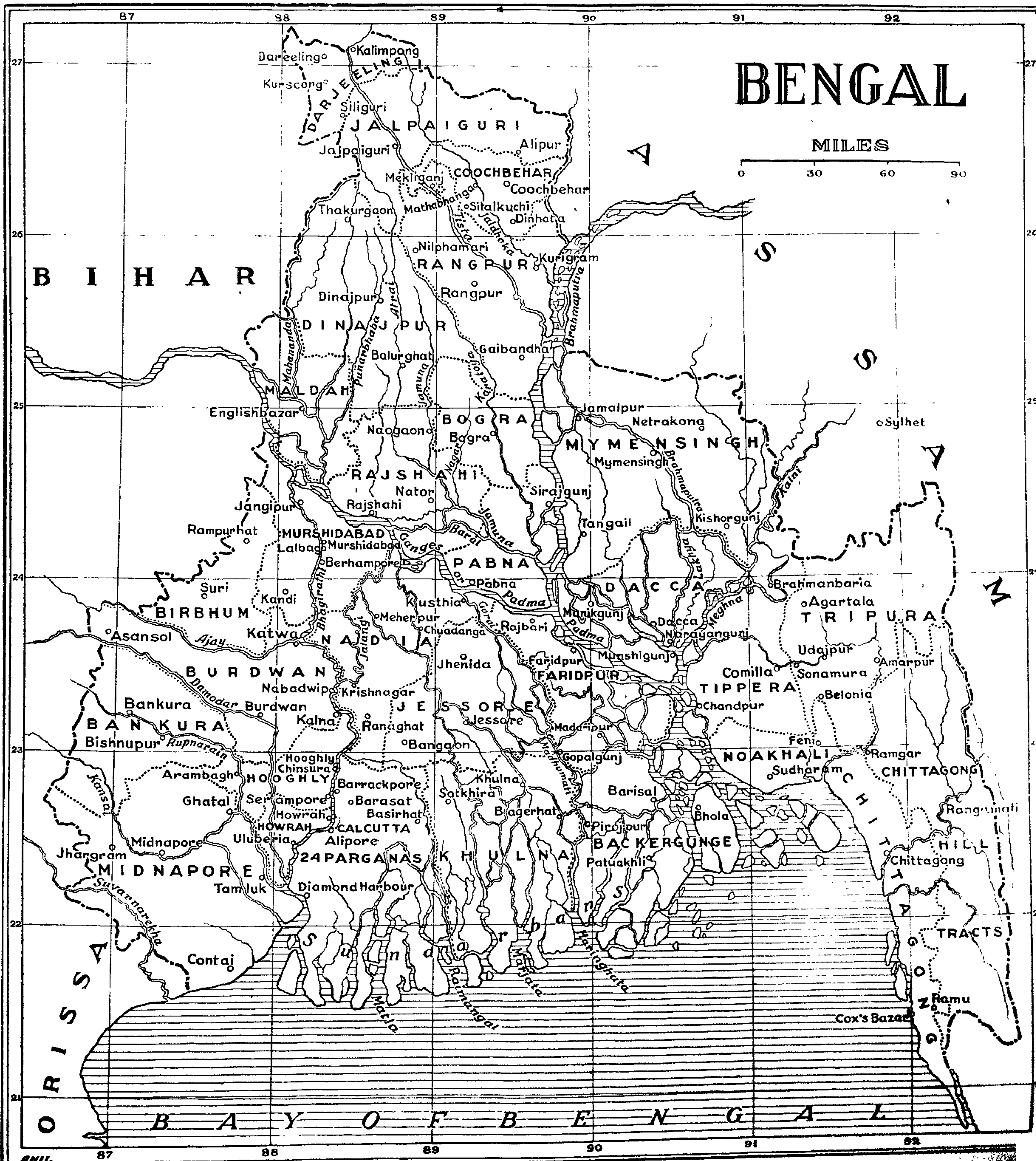
I-tsing.—A Record of the Buddhist Religion by I-tsing. Tr. by J. Takakusu.

JA.—Journal Asiatique, Paris.

JAHRS.—Journal of the Andhra Historical Research Society, Rajahmundry.
JAOS.—Journal of the American Oriental Society, New Haven.
JARS.—Journal of the Assam Research Society, Gauhati.
JASB.—Journal of the (Royal) Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta.
JBORS.—Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society, Patna.
JBRAS. (*JBo.Br.RAS*).—Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.
JBTS.—Journal of the Buddhist Texts Society, London.
JGIS.—Journal of the Greater India Society, Calcutta.
JIH.—Journal of Indian History, Madras.
JISOA.—Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art, Calcutta.
JL.—Journal of the Department of Letters, Calcutta University.
JOR.—Journal of Oriental Research, Madras.
JRAS.—Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britan and Ireland, London.
JRASBL.—Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Third Series, Letters, Calcutta.
Kam. Sas.—Kāmarūpa-śāsanāvalī (in Bengali), by Padmanath Bhattacharya.
Kav.-*Bibl.*—History and Bibliography of Nyāya-Vaiśeshika Literature, by Gopinath Kaviraj.
Keith-*Drama.*—Sanskrit Drama, by Sir A. B. Keith.
Keith-*Lit.*—History of Sanskrit Literature, by Sir A. B. Keith.
KS.—Kashmir Sanskrit Texts, Allahabad.
KV.—Kāla-viveka of Jīmūtavāhana (Bibl. Ind.)
Levi-*Népal.*—Le Népal, by Sylvain Lévi.
Lüders-*List.*—A List of Brāhmī Inscriptions other than those of Aśoka, by Heinrich Lüders (Appendix to *EI.* X.).
MASB.—Memoirs of the (Royal) Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta.
M. Cat.—Descriptive Catalogue of Mss. in Madras Government Oriental Library.
Mitra-*Nepal.*—Sanskrit Buddhist Literature of Nepal, by Rajendra Lal Mitra. Calcutta 1882.
Mitra-*Notices.*—Notices of Sanskrit Manuscripts by Rajendra Lal Mitra.
MMK.—Mañjuśrī-mūlakalpa. Ed. T. Ganapati Sastri. (*J*) after the abbreviation, denotes the text edited by K. P. Jayaswal in *IHI.*
Nach. Gott.—Nachrichten von der Kgl. Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Gœttingen, Philolog.-histor. Klasse.

Nasiri.—Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī. Tr. by H. Raverty.
NIA.—New Indian Antiquary, Bombay.
NSP.—Nirṇaya-sāgara Press.
Num. Suppl.—Numismatic Supplement to *JASB.*
Orissa.—Orissa, by R. D. Banerji.
OTF.—Oriental Translation Fund (of *RAS.*).
OZ.—Ostasiatische Zeitschrift, Berlin and Leipzig.
Pag Sam Jon Zang.—Pag Sam Jon Zang of Sumpā Mkhan-Po Yese Pal Jor. Ed. Sarat Chandra Das. Calcutta 1908.
Paharpur.—Excavations at Paharpur, Bengal, by K. N. Dikshit (*ASM.* No. 55).
PB.—Pālas of Bengal, by R. D. Banerji (*MASB.* Vol. V).
PCB.—K. B. Pathak Commemoration Volume.
PHAI.—Political History of Ancient India by H. C. Raychaudhuri.
PHC.—Proceedings of the Indian History Congress.
Proc. ASB.—Proceedings of the (Royal) Asiatic Society of Bengal.
PRP.—Prāyaśchitta-prakaraṇa of Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva. Ed. Girish Chandra Vidyāratna. Published by *VRS.*
PSC.—Proceedings of the Indian Science Congress.
PTOC.—Proceedings and Transactions of the All-India Oriental Conference.
RA. (*AR.*).—The Rāshṭrakūṭas and Their Times by A. S. Altekar.
Rao-Icon.—Elements of Hindu Iconography, by T. A. Gopinatha Rao.
RC.—Rāmacharita of Sandhyākara Nandī.
RC.[1]—Rāmacharita. Ed. Haraprasad Sastri (*MASB.* v).
RC.[2]—Rāmacharita. Ed. R. C. Majumdar, R. G. Basak and N. G. Banerji. Published by VRS.
Renn.—Bengal Atlas by J. Rennell.
R. Phil.—History of Indian Philosophy by Sir S. Radhakrishnan.
RT.—Rājataraṅgiṇī of Kalhaṇa. (Tr. indicates translation by Stein).
Saraswati-*Sculpture.*—Early Sculpture of Bengal, by Sarasi Kumar Saraswati (Reprinted from *JL.* xxx).
Sastri-*Cat.*—Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit Mss. in the Government Collection under the care of the (Royal) Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta. By MM. Haraprasad Sastri.
SBE.—Sacred Books of the East Series, Harvard.
SIA.—Studies in Indian Antiquities, by H. C. Raychaudhuri.
SII.—South Indian Inscriptions.

SPP.—Sāhitya Parishat Patrikā (in Bengali), Calcutta.
SPS.—Sanskrit Sāhitya Parishat Series, Calcutta.
Sumpā.—see Pag Sam Jon Zang.
Takakusu-*I-tsing.*—*see* I-tsing.
Tantras.—Studies in the Tantras, by Prabodh Chandra Bagchi.
Tar.—Tāranātha, Geschichte des Buddhismus in Indien. German tr. by A. Schiefner.
Tar.-*Ges.*—see Tar.
TCM.—Triennial Catalogue of Madras Government Manuscript Library for 1919-22.
TK.—History of Kanauj, by R. S. Tripathi.
TSS.—Trivandrum Sanskrit Series.
V. Cat.—Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit and Prakrit Mss. in the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society by H. D. Velankar.
Ven. P.—Venkateśvara Press.
VJI.—Vaṅger Jātīya Itihāsa, Rājanya-kāṇḍa (in Bengali), by Nagendranath Vasu.
VP.—Śrīvāṇī-vilāsa Press.
VRS.—Varendra Research Society, Rajshahi.
VRS. M.—Monograph of the *VRS.*
VRS.-Rep.—Annual Report of the *VRS.*
VSP.—Vaṅgīya Sāhitya Parishat, Calcutta.
VSP.-Cat.—Handbook to the Sculptures in the *VSP.* Museum, by Manomohan Ganguly. (This abbreviation has also been used in Ch. XI as indicating *Catalogue of Sanskrit Mss. in VSP.*).
VSS.—Vizianagram Sanskrit Series.
Watters.—On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India, by T. Watters.
Wint.-*Gesch.*—Geschichte der Indischen Litteratur, by M. Winternitz.
Wint.-*Lit.*—History of Sanskrit Literature, by M. Winternitz (English tr. of *Wint.-Gesch*). Published by Calcutta University.
WZKM.—Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenländes, Vienna.
ZDMG.—Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesselschaft, Leipzig.


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PABNA
DACCA
TRIPURA
BIRBHUM
NADIA
BURDWAN
FARIDPUR
TIPPERA
JESSORE
BANKURA
NOAKHALI
CHITTAGONG
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HOWRAH
CALCUTTA
24 PARGANAS
KHULNA
BACKERGUNGE
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CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS
Darjeeling
Kalimpong
Kurseong
Siliguri
Jalpaiguri
Alipur
Mekliganj
Coochbehar
Sitalkuchi
Dinhata
Thakurgaon
Mathabhanga
Nilphamari
Kurigram
Rangpur
Dinajpur
Balurghat
Gaibandha
Englishbazar
Naogaon
Bogra
Jamalpur
Netrakona
Sylhet
Mymensingh
Nator
Rajshahi
Sirajgunj
Jangipur
Tangail
Kishorgunj
Rampurhat
Lalbag
Murshidabad
Berhampore
Pabna
Brahmanbaria
Agartala
Suri
Kandi
Kusthia
Meherpur
Chuadanga
Rajbari
Manikgunj
Dacca
Narayangunj
Asansol
Katwa
Jhenida
Faridpur
Munshigunj
Udaipur
Comilla
Sonamura
Amarpur
Nabadwip
Krishnagar
Belonia
Bankura
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Chandpur
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Serampore
Barasat
Howrah
Basirhat
Bagerhat
Bhola
Rangamati
Pirojpur
Midnapore
Uluberia
Alipore
Jhargram
Patuakhli
Chittagong
Tamluk
Diamond Harbour
Contai
Ramu
Cox's Bazar
Mahananda
Punarbhaba
Atrai
Jamuna
Karatoya
Tista
Jaldhaka
Brahmaputra
Nagar
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Ganges
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Bhagirathi
Jalangi
Ajay
Damodar
Rupnarain
Kansai
Suvarnarekha
Madhumati
Meghna
Lakhya
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Raimangal
Malancha
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[To face p. 1]

CHAPTER I

PHYSICAL AND HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY

I. Physical Aspects

Bengal is the name given to the eastern province of British India which stretches from the Himālayas in the north to the Bay of Bengal in the south, and from the Brahmaputra, the Kangsa, the Surmā, and the Sajjuk rivers in the east to the Nāgar, the Barākar, and the lower reaches of the Suvarṇarekhā in the west. The area described above lies roughly between 27° 9′ and 20° 50′ north latitude and 86° 35′ and 92° 30′ east longitude. The extent of the province, excluding the States of Hill Tippera, Cooch Bihar, and Sikkim, and the surface area covered by large rivers and estuaries is 77,521 square miles and the total population a little over sixty millions. The majority of the people in the western districts are Hindus. In the east Muslims predominate. The area of some of the southern districts is increasing owing to the recession of the Bay in the south.

The territory inhabited by the Bengali-speaking race stretches far beyond the political boundaries of the modern province of Bengal. It extends to the east into the districts of Goalpara, Sylhet, and Cachar which form parts of the province of Assam, and to the west into the districts of Manbhum, Santal Parganas, and Purnea which are included within the official boundaries of Bihar. The *sarkārs* of Sylhet and Purnea, the *parganā* of Akmahal (now Rājmahal) and the famous Pass of Teliagarhi, now in the Santal Parganas, formed integral parts of the *subah* of Bengal in the days of Akbar. Rennell's map of the northern provinces shows that even as late as 1779 Purnea was included within Bengal and not "Bahar" *i.e.*, Bihar. The northern boundary of the province reached the summit of the Himālayas as early as the time of the Gupta kings. In the east "the valley of the Bārak with its two Districts of Cachar and Sylhet had formed the north-eastern part of the Dacca Division" of Bengal as late as the year 1874.

The province of Bengal lacks some of the extraordinary varieties of physical aspect for which the great sub-continent, of which it is an integral part, is justly famous. It has no deserts

and no hills or ridges except on the fringe in the extreme north, east, and west. It cannot boast of anything comparable to the purple waters of the Kashmirian lakes which reflect the splendours of Haramukh, the gushing streams of Central India which leap into falls amidst the marble rocks near Jubbulpore, or the back-waters and cascades of Malabar that lend charm to the scenery of the western sea-board of the southern Presidency. It can, however, justly take pride in the snow-capped peaks with gold-hued crests in the northern district of Darjeeling, a vast riverine plain which forms the focus of three great river-systems where the country "widens out into a panorama of irrigated fertility," of swamps and flats in the south cut up by hundreds of coves and creeks, once the "royal throne of kings," now the residence of the lord of the jungles.

The hand of nature has split up the province into four grand divisions which fairly correspond to its major political divisions in historic epochs. North of the main branch of the Ganges, now known as the Padmā, and west of the Brahmaputra, lies the extensive region which embraces the modern Rajshahi Division and the State of Cooch Bihar. The most important part of this area constituted the ancient land of Puṇḍravardhana of which Varendrī was a well-known district (*maṇḍala*). West of another branch of the Ganges, namely the Bhāgīrathī, or the Hooghly, stretches the great Burdwan Division—the Vardhamāna-*bhukti* of the times of yore. A considerable part of the area answered to the flourishing territory of ancient Rāḍhā. Between the Bhāgīrathī, the Padmā, the lower reaches of the Brahmaputra, and the estuary of the Meghnā lies the central region of Bengal embracing the bulk of the Presidency Division and a considerable portion of the Dacca Division. This area was known to Pliny and Ptolemy as the territory of the Gangaridai, and to Kālidāsa as the land of the Vaṅgas who were specially noted for their skill in handling boats. Beyond the Meghnā in the east stretches the Chittagong Division within whose embrace are supposed to lie the buried remains of the royal seat of Samataṭa. It has to be noted that the divisions of ancient Bengal referred to above at times transgressed the limits set by nature.

The most characteristic physical feature of Bengal proper is its river-system. The two mighty rivers, the Ganges and the Brahmaputra, with their numerous branches and tributaries have played a large part in shaping its destiny. By the vast deposit of silt carried from uplands, they have created the enormous area of deltaic lowlands and the process is still going on in full vigour. The same fluvial action is also responsible foi the constant shiftings

of river-beds to an extent unknown in any other part of India with the exception, perhaps, of Sind. These changes in river-courses have made and unmade flourishing cities and thriving marts, and sometimes changed the whole outlook of large areas. In view of the great influence exerted by the river-system on the history of Bengal, it is necessary to make a brief reference to its outstanding features.

The Ganges enters the province of Bengal at the point where the low-lying Rajmahal Hills almost touch its waters. The narrow passes of Teliagarhi and Sikragully (Sikrigali) form excellent strategic points in Bengal's first line of defence. It is not, therefore, a mere accident that far-famed capital cities like *Gauḍa-Lakhnawati*, Pandua, Tanda and Rajmahal should have grown up in the neighbourhood of this salient.

The present course of the Ganges, after it has swept in a curve round the spurs and slopes of the Rajmahal Hills, is very different from what it was before the sixteenth century. In those days it flowed further north and east and the city of Gauḍa was probably on its right bank. There has been more than one shifting towards the south and west before the Ganges reached its present course, and the dry beds of some of its old channels can still be traced.

About twenty-five miles to the south of ancient Gauḍa the Ganges divides itself into two branches, the Bhāgīrathī, of which the lower portion is called the Hooghly, running almost due south, and the Padmā flowing in a south-easterly direction. To-day the enormous volume of the waters of the Ganges is carried mainly by the Padmā, while the upper part of the Bhāgīrathī has shrunk to a very shallow stream. But formerly the Bhāgīrathī was in all probability the more important channel of the Ganges. It is difficult to determine when the great change took place, but there is hardly any doubt that by the beginning of the sixteenth century A.D. the Padmā already ranked as the main stream of the Ganges.

One important evidence adduced in favour of the view that the Bhāgīrathī was the principal stream of the Ganges in ancient times, is the great sanctity attached to it by the Hindus. The mighty Padmā causes havoc and creates terror, but is not looked upon with great veneration, nor does it claim any traditional religious sanctity.

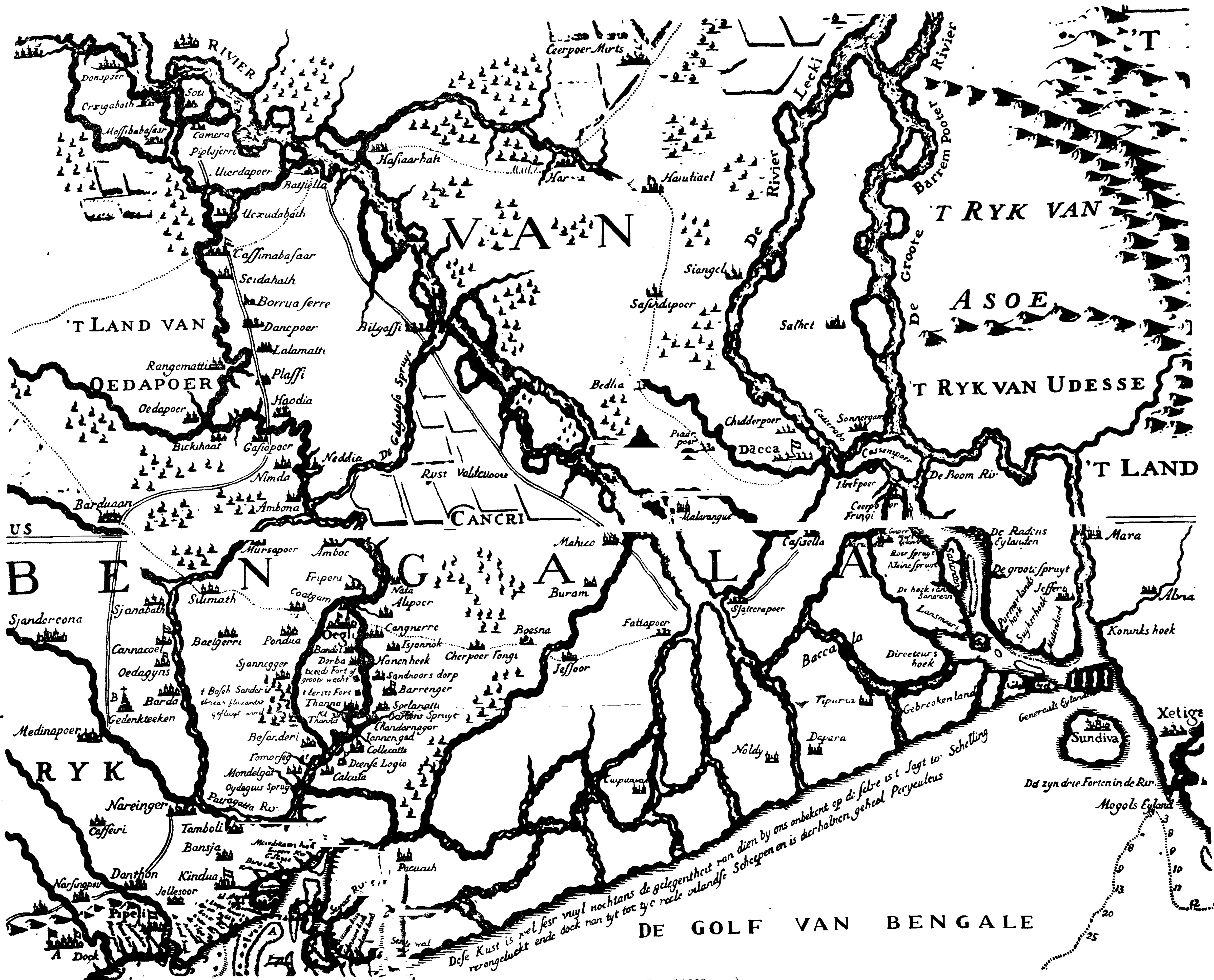
The earlier course of the lower Ganges, as it rushed down the channel of the Bhāgīrathī, was somewhat different from what it is to-day. Small rivulets from the west like the Bansloi, the Mor, and the Ajay fell into it after it had broken off from the parent river, as now, but at Triveṇī (near Hooghly) it branched off into three

streams. These were the Sarasvatī flowing south-west past Sātgāon (Saptagrāma), the Yamunā (Jumna) running its course south-east down its present bed, and the Bhāgīrathī proper, the middle offshoot, gliding south down the present Hooghly channel up to Calcutta and then through the Ādi-Gaṅgā (Tolly's Nulla) past Kalighat, Baruipur, and Magra to the sea. There are reasons to believe that the Sarasvatī flowed into an estuary near modern Tamluk and received not only the waters of the Rupnārāyan and the Dāmodar but those of many smaller streams issuing from the hills of the Santal Parganas. Sometime after the eighth century A.D. the port of Tamluk lost its importance on account of the silting up of the mouth of the Sarasvatī and the consequent shifting of its course. Its place was eventually taken up by Saptagrāma or Satgaon, higher up the river, which figures as the Muslim capital of South-western Bengal in the fourteenth century A.D. In the sixteenth century the main waters of the Bhāgīrathī began to flow through the Hooghly channel. Satgaon was ruined, and first Hooghly, then Calcutta, took its place. The upper Sarasvatī to-day is a dead river, but the Bhāgīrathī or the Hooghly has deserted the old Ādi-Gaṅgā channel and flows through the lower course of the Sarasvatī below Sankrail.

The course of the Padmā has also considerably changed during the last four centuries. It is difficult to trace accurately its various channels, but the probability is that it at first flowed past Rāmpur Boāliā through the Chalan Bil (or Jhil), the Dhaleswari, and the Buḍigaṅgā rivers past Dacca into the Meghnā estuary. In the eighteenth century the lower course of the Padmā lay much further to the south. The river flowed through the districts of Faridpur and Bākarganj, and joined the Meghnā estuary just above the island of Dakshin Shāhbāzpur, about 25 miles due south of Chāndpur. Rājnagar, the famous city of Rājā Rājavallabha, was then on its left bank, and hard by this city ran the river Kāligaṅgā connecting the Padmā with the Meghnā river. About the middle of the nineteenth century A.D., the main volume of the waters of the Padmā flowed through this channel, which came to be known as the Kīrtināśā. Gradually the Padmā adopted its present course.

In addition to the two main streams, the Bhāgīrathī and the Padmā, the water of the Ganges reaches the sea through numerous other branches thrown off by the latter. Two of these, the Jalaṅgī and the Mātābhāṅgā flow into the Bhāgīrathī and swell the waters of its lower channel, the Hooghly. Many other old branches like the Bhairab and the Kumār are now dying rivers and their place has been taken by the Madhumatī and the Āriālkhān.

The Padmā is joined in its lower course by the Brahmaputra



VAN DEN BROUCKE'S MAP (1660 A.D.)

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and the Meghnā, and the combined rivers form the mighty Meghnā estuary. At present the main volume of the waters of the Brahmaputra rolls down the Jamunā which meets the Padmā near Goalundo. But the old course of the Brahmaputra was very different: after tracing a curve round the Garo Hills on the west it took a south-eastern course near Dewanganj, and passing by Jamalpur (near which the Jhināi branched off from it), Mymensing, and the neighbourhood of the Madhupur Jungle in the district of Mymensing, it flowed through the eastern part of the Dacca district, and having thrown off a branch, called Lakhmiyā, passed by Nāngalband to the south-west of Sonārgāon and fell into the Dhaleswari. The Lakhmiyā ran almost parallel to the main course, and passing by Narayanganj met the Dhaleswari a little to the west of its junction with the main stream of the Brahmaputra. This course of the Brahmaputra was already deserted in the eighteenth century when it flowed further east and joined the Meghnā near Bhairab-bazar in the Mymensing district. But, as in the case of the Ganges, religious sanctity still attaches to the older course, and even to-day thousands of pilgrims take their bath at the muddy pools near Nāngalband. But the easternmost channel, too, soon dwindled into an insignificant stream. Towards the end of the eighteenth century the Jamuna river increased in importance, and since about 1850 A.D. it has become the main channel of the Brahmaputra.

Of the numerous rivers in Northern Bengal that flowed into the Ganges or the Brahmaputra, a few deserve special mention as having changed their courses considerably in comparatively recent times. The river Tistā at first ran due south from Jalpaiguri in three channels, namely, the Karatoyā to the east, the Punarbhavā (Purnabhabā) to the west, and the Ātrāi in the centre. This perhaps accounts for its name *Trisrotā* (possessed of three streams) which has been shortened or corrupted into Tistā. Of these the Punarbhavā emptied itself into the Mahānandā. The Ātrāi, passing through a vast marshy area known as the Chalan Bil (Jhil), joined the Karatoyā, and the united stream fell into the Padmā near Jafarganj. The Karatoyā was once a large and sacred river and we have still a *Karatoyā-māhātmya* which bears testimony to its sanctity. On its banks stood the city of Puṇḍravardhana whose antiquity reaches back to the Maurya period. The dwindling Karatoyā still flows by the ruins of this ancient city at Mahāsthāngarh in the Bogra district, and forms a fixed landmark in the shifting sands of the fluvial history of this province.

As regards the Tistā, the parent stream of the three famous rivers of Northern Bengal, Hunter calls attention to the fact that

in the destructive floods of 1787 A.D., it suddenly forsook its old channel and rushing south-east ran into the Brahmaputra. There are, however, reasons to believe that the bed to which the mighty torrent turned on this occasion is an old one which had been deserted in ages long gone by. The sudden change in the course of the Tistā in 1787 A.D. was originally regarded by many as having caused the Brahmaputra to sweep through the Jamuna channel, but this view no longer finds general acceptance.

The change in the course of the river Kosi (Kauśikī) is, perhaps, more remarkable than even that of the Tistā. This river which now flows through the district of Purnea and unites its waters with the Ganges at a point much higher up than Rājmahal, originally ran eastward and fell into the Brahmaputra. The channel of the Kosi must have, therefore, been steadily shifting towards the west right across the whole breadth of Northern Bengal. There was a time when the Kosi and the Mahānandā joined the Karatoyā, and formed a sort of ethnic boundary line between the civilised people on the south, and the Kochs, Kirātas, *etc.*, on the north.

It would appear from what has been stated above that great changes have taken place in the courses of some of the important rivers in Bengal during the last four or five hundred years. Though positive evidence is lacking, we must presume the possibility of similar changes in the remoter past. It is to be regretted that we have no knowledge of their nature and extent. In any case we must bear in mind that during the period with which this volume deals the courses of the rivers in Bengal were probably somewhat different not only from those of the present time, but even from those in the recent past of which we have more definite knowledge. This point must not be lost sight of in discussing any geographical question concerning ancient Bengal on the basis of the position of the rivers.

The frequent changes in the courses of rivers have been responsible for the ruin of many old places, at times by washing them off, and more often by making them unhealthy and inaccessible. Reference has already been made to Tāmralipti and Saptagrāma. It is believed that the shifting of the beds of the Kosi river gave rise to the swamps and floods that contributed to the ruin of the city of Gauḍa. The capricious Padmā has swept away so many cities and villages within living memory, that we can well imagine the devastating effect of this and other rivers on the province of Bengal. In addition to the frequent shiftings of courses, the vast deposit of silt by the rivers in the deltaic region, between the Bhāgīrathī and the Padmā, has been a potent instrument in

changing its physical aspect to a considerable extent. For the deposit of silt constantly raises the level of land in some areas and makes the other regions comparatively lower and water-logged. The vast Sunderban area in the delta offers an intriguing problem. Many hold the view that the Sunderbans had once been a populous tract but were depopulated by the ravages of nature and the depredations of marauding peoples like the Maghs and the Portuguese. References to the Khāḍī-*vishaya* or -*maṇḍala*, a flourishing district in the Sena period which, in later ages, became part of the dense forest, and to the country between the Biskhālī and Rābanābād which was depopulated by Maghs, may be recalled in this connection. Epigraphic evidence proves that the marshy area called Koṭālipāḍā, near Gopalganj in the district of Faridpur, was once a thriving seat of civilisation and possibly a centre of sea-borne trade and commerce. The change in the condition of the interior of the districts of Jessore and Khulna in recent times also well illustrates what might have taken place on a much larger scale during the preceding centuries.[1]

II. Bengal in Holy Writ

The historic lands included within the area now known as Bengal find no mention in the Vedic hymns. The horizon of the earliest Aryan singers is apparently limited to the region extending eastwards only as far as Bhāgalpur. The theologians of the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*,[2] however, refer to peoples who lived in large numbers beyond the frontiers of Aryandom and were classed as *dasyus*. Among such folks we find mention of the Puṇḍras. Puṇḍranagara, the capital city of this ancient people, is proved by epigraphic evidence to have been situated in the Bogra district of Northern Bengal. Some writers have traced the name of the Vaṅgas, another early Bengal tribe, to the *Aitareya Āraṇyaka*.[3] In the text occur

[1] For a full discussion, with references to authorities, of the changes in the courses of rivers, cf. *Physical Features of Ancient Bengal* by Dr. R. C. Majumdar (*D. R. Bhandarkar Volume*, pp. 341-364) and *The Changing Face of Bengal—a Study in Riverine Economy* by Dr. Radhakamal Mookerjee (published by the University of Calcutta). Reference may also be made to W. W. Hunter's *A Statistical Account of Bengal*, C. R. Wilson's *The Early Annals of the English in Bengal*, I. 128 ff, address on *The Waterways in East Bengal*, at the Rotary Club, Dacca, by J. W. E. Berry (*Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 15-6-38, p. 10) and *JASB*. 1895, pp. 1-24; also cf. S. C. Majumdar, *Rivers of the Bengal Delta*, 1941, and N. K. Bhattasali, *Antiquity of the Lower Ganges and its Courses* (*Science and Culture*, VII. 233-39).

[2] See *infra* p. 35.

[3] II. I. 1. Keith, *Ait. Ār.* 101, 200.

the words "*Vayāṁsi Vaṅgāvagadhāś-Cerapādāḥ.*" The expression *Vaṅgāvagadhāḥ* has been emended to *Vaṅga-Magadhāḥ*, that is, the peoples of Vaṅga and Magadha. The *Āraṇyaka* refers to them as folks who were guilty of transgression. Commentators, ancient and modern, differ as to the real meaning of the words used in the text. The possibility that the expressions in the *Āraṇyaka* signify old ethnic names is not excluded. But it is extremely hazardous to build any theory about the antiquity of the Vaṅgas on such fragile foundations.

The first unambiguous references to the Vaṅgas occur in the ancient epics and the *Dharmasūtras.* The Bodhāyana *Dharmasūtra*[1] divides the land known to it into three ethnic or cultural belts which were regarded with varying degrees of esteem. The holiest of the three was Āryāvarta, lying between the Himālayas and the western Vindhyas and watered by the upper Ganges and the Jumna. The zone that stood next in point of sanctity embraced Malwa, East and South Bihar, South Kathiawar, the Deccan, and the lower Indus valley. The outermost belt was formed by the Āraṭṭas of the Punjab, the Puṇḍras of North Bengal, the Sauvīras occupying parts of Southern Punjab and Sind, the Vaṅgas of Central and Eastern Bengal, and the Kaliṅgas of Orissa and adjoining tracts. The regions inhabited by these peoples were regarded as altogether outside the pale of Vedic culture. Persons who lived amidst these folks even for a temporary period were required to go through expiatory rites.

In the epics the Vaṅgas are no longer shunned as impure barbarians. The *Rāmāyaṇa*[2] mentions them in a list of peoples that entered into intimate political relations with the high-born aristocrats of Ayodhyā. The search parties that were sent to the east in quest of the heroine are asked to visit the land of the Puṇḍras and Mandara.[3] The last mentioned place reminds one of Madāran in Western Bengal (or Mandār Hill near Bhāgalpur).

In the Great Epic[4] Bhīma undertakes a hurricane campaign in the land we call Bengal. Having killed the king of Modāgiri (Monghyr) he fell on the mighty lord of the Puṇḍras as well as the potentate who ruled on the banks of the river Kosi. Having defeated them he attacked the king of the Vaṅgas. Next he reduced to subjection the lords of Tāmralipta (modern Tamluk in the

[1] I. 1. 25-31, L. Srinivasacharya's ed., pp. 11-13.

[2] II. 10. 36-37—*Yāvadāvartate chakraṁ tāvatī me Vasundharā|*

* * * *

Vaṅg-Āṅga-Magadhā-Matsyāḥ samṛiddhāḥ Kāśi-Kosalāḥ.||

[3] IV. 40. 23-25.

[4] *Mbh.* II. 30.

Midnapore district) and Karvaṭa, apparently a neighbouring place,[1] as well as the rulers of the Suhmas (in the present Hooghly district), those who lived in maritime regions, and all the hordes of outlandish barbarians (*mlechchhas*). Having conquered these territories and despoiling them of their riches, the mighty victor advanced to the Lauhitya (Brahmaputra). From all the kings of the *mlechchhas* who dwelt on the sea-coast he exacted tribute and precious gems of various kinds. In connection with the same campaign we have reference to a people called Pra-Suhmas who must have lived near the Suhmas in some part of Western Bengal.

Further light on the topography of Bengal in the epic age and the growing esteem in which the land was held by poets of upper India is thrown by the *Tīrthayātrā* section of the *Vanaparvan*.[2] We have here pointed reference to the sanctity of the river Karatoyā which is known to have flowed past the city of Puṇḍranagara (Mahāsthāngarh) in North Bengal and of the spot where the Ganges emptied itself into the sea (*Gaṅgāyāstatra rājendra sāgarasya cha saṅgame*).

Jaina writers of the *Āchārāṅga-sūtra*[3] describe the land of the Lāḍhas (Rāḍhā) in West Bengal as a pathless country inhabited by a rude folk who attacked peaceful monks. In one of the *Upāṅgas*,[4] however, the Lāḍhas as well as the Vaṅgas are classed as Aryans. The latter are represented as possessing the city of Tāmalitti (Tāmralipti or Tamluk). The Lāḍhas had Koḍīvarisa for their chief city. Koḍīvarisa (Koṭīvarsha) has been identified with modern Bāngarh in the Dinajpur district. In the Gupta and Pāla periods Koṭīvarsha was included in the Puṇḍravardhana province and not in Rāḍhā.

The *Āchārāṅga-sūtra*[5] divides the land of Lāḍha into two parts named Vajjabhūmi and Subbha (=Suhma-) bhūmi. Vajjabhūmi or Vajrabhūmi had its capital, according to commentators, at Panitabhūmi. The name Vajrabhūmi, "Land of Diamond," reminds us of the *sarkar* of Madāran in South-west Bengal, mentioned in the *Ain-i-Akbari* in which there was a diamond mine. The *sarkar* answers to parts of the modern Birbhum, Burdwan, and Hooghly districts. The 'Land of Diamond' may have extended westwards as far as Kokhrā on the borders of Bihar which was famous for its diamond mines in the days of the Emperor Jahāngīr.

The Suhmas are, as we have seen above, mentioned in the *Mahābhārata*. They also appear in the Buddhist *Saṁyutta Nikāya*[6]

[1] It is tempting to identify the Karvaṭas with the Kharwārs of Midnapore and other districts of Western Bengal (Hunter, III. 49, 51 etc.).

[2] Ch. 85. 2-4. [3] I. 8. 3. See *infra* p. 36. [4] *IA*. 1891, p. 375.

[5] I. 8. 3; Jacobi in *S.B.E.* XXII. 84, 264.

[6] V. 89; Malalasekera, *Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names*, II. 1252.

and the *Telapatta Jātaka*[1] under the name of Sumbhas. Their chief town was Setaka (or Desaka). A Śvetakādhishṭhāna is often referred to in the inscriptions of the Eastern Gaṅgas, but its identity is uncertain.

The Great Epic distinguishes the Suhmas from the people of Tamluk, but the *Daśakumāra-charita*[2] includes Dāmalipta (Tāmralipta or Tamluk) in the Suhma territory. The *Pavanadūta*[3] of Dhoyī (twelfth century A.D.) places the Suhma country on the Ganges and refers to the famous shrines of Murāri (Vishṇu), of Raghukulaguru (the Sun), and of Ardhanārīśvara (combined form of Śiva and his consort) that adorned the land. Mention is also made of a city of Śiva (*Chandrārdhamauli*) and an embankment that commemorated King Vallālasena. These details, to which attention is invited by several writers,[4] point to the Triveṇī-Saptagrāma-Pandua area in the Hooghly district as the heart of the Suhma country. Nīlakaṇṭha[5] equates Suhma with Rāḍhā. According to the *Digvijaya-prakāśa*,[6] the last mentioned territory lies to the east of Birbhum and to the north of the river Dāmodar. The "Land of Diamond" should be excluded from that part of Rāḍhā which was known as Suhma.

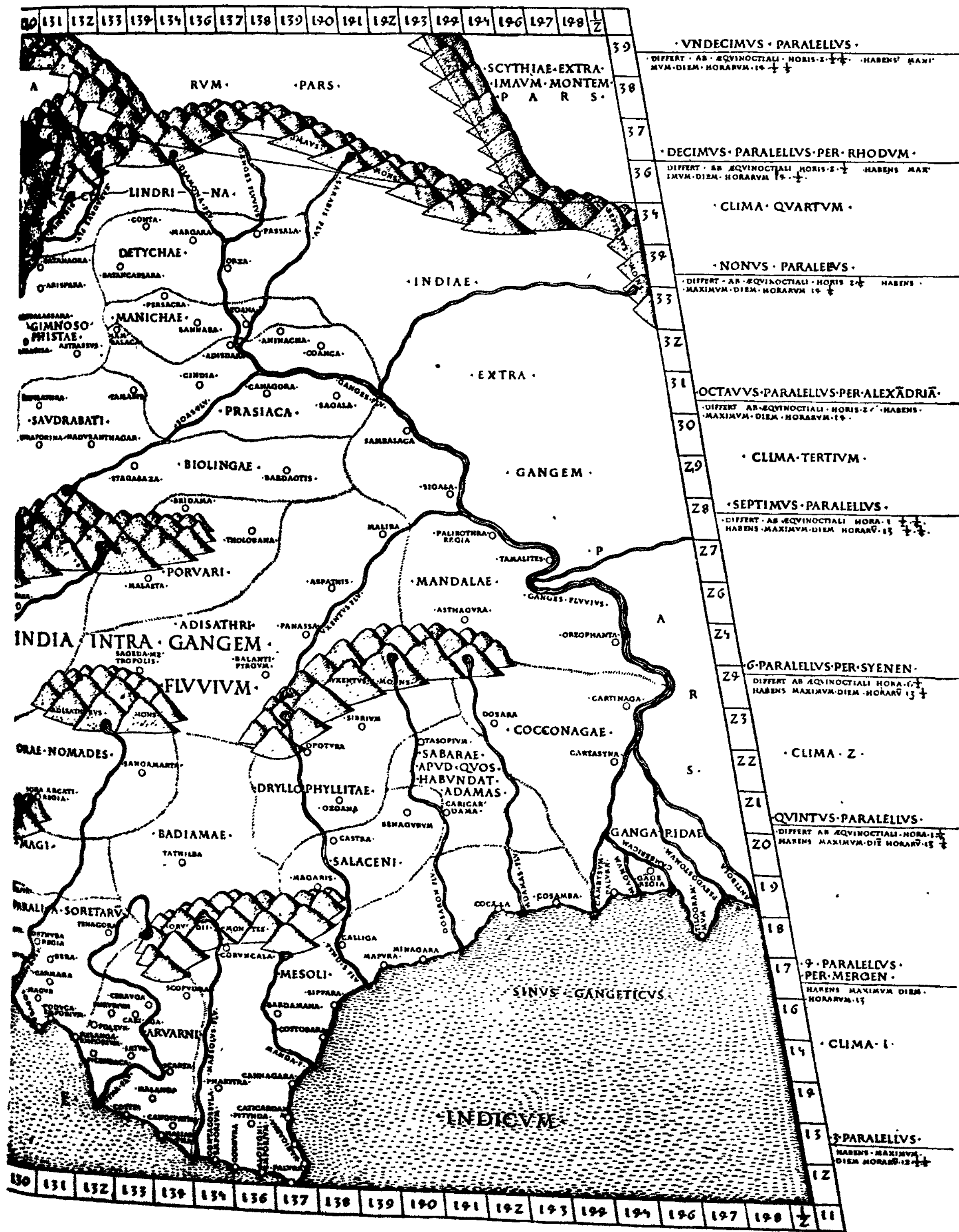
Early Buddhist writers who knew the "Sumbhas" show little acquaintance with the Vaṅgas. A knowledge of that ancient people is sometimes inferred from the epithets Vaṅgantaputta and Vaṅgīśa found in the Pāli canon.[7] But the earliest clear Buddhist literary reference to Vaṅga is probably that contained in the *Milinda-pañho*.[8]

Pāṇini, who flourished long before the second century B.C., knows Gauḍapura[9] but not Vaṅga. The last mentioned territory is, however, well-known to his great commentator, Patañjali.[10]

III. The Historic Period

The literary references in the Vedic, Epic, and Sūtra texts, both Brahmanical and non-Brahmanical, do not admit of a definite

[1] *Jat.* I. No. 96. [2] Sixth Uchchhvāsa, *Mitraguptacharitam*.
[3] vv. 27 ff.
[4] Cf. R. D. Banerji, *JASB.* 1909, pp. 245 ff; G. M. Sarkar, *JL.* XVI. 23, 57, 78; C. Chakravarti, *Pavanadūtam* of Dhoyī, Introduction, p. 25.
[5] Commentary on *Mbh.* II. 30, 16.
[6] *Vasumatī*, 1340 (B.S.), Māgha, p. 610. The work is attributed to a contemporary of Pratāpāditya (S. Mitra, *Yaśohar-Khulnār Itihāsa*, 132).
[7] *EHBR.* 8; *Manoratha-pūraṇī*, I. 270; *Apadāna*, II. 497 (v. 29).
[8] Malalasekera, *Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names*, II. 802; *S.B.E.* XXXVI. ii. 269 (Text 359). The Vaṅga (Vaṅka) of the *Mahāniddesa*, I. 154, may not refer to the famous Janapada in Bengal, but to Bangka near Sumatra.
[9] VI. 2. 99-100. [10] IV. 1. 4; IV. 2. 1; Kielhorn's ed., vol. II. 269, 282.



[*To face p. 11*]

PTOLEMY'S MAP OF INDIA WITHIN THE GANGES

chronological arrangement. For a chronological treatment of the subject it is necessary to turn to the evidence of literature, Indian and foreign, assignable to well-known epochs, and that of early epigraphs.

The historians of Alexander refer to a people whom they call the Gangaridai. According to the evidence of Pliny, Ptolemy, and many other classical writers, the people in question occupied the country of the lower Ganges and its distributaries. Jaina and Buddhist legends connect the names of the great Mauryas and their contemporaries with Puṇḍravardhana, and Chinese pilgrims found Aśokan monuments in various parts of the province. The existence of Puṇḍranagara in the Maurya epoch is, in the opinion of some scholars, proved by an old Brāhmī inscription,[1] unearthed at Mahāsthāngarh in the Bogra district.

Glimpses of Bengal in the early centuries after Christ are afforded by the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea,* the Geography of Ptolemy, the *Milinda-pañho,* and the Nāgārjunikonda inscriptions. The *Periplus,* describing the east coast of India, mentions the river Ganges and a market-town on its bank which had the same name as the river. The city of Gange is also mentioned by Ptolemy who describes it as a metropolis and distinguishes it from Tamalites *i.e.* Tāmralipti. Of special interest is Ptolemy's reference to the five[2] mouths of the Ganges: namely, the Kambyson mouth, the most western; the second mouth, called Mega; the third called Kamberikhon; the fourth styled Pseudostomon; and the fifth mouth, Antibole. Opinions differ in regard to the identification of these distributaries. In the opinion of the present writer, Kambyson stands for Sanskrit Kapiśā mentioned by Kālidāsa. This answers to the modern Kāsāi which flows past Midnapore and, like the Rupnārāyan, may have been erroneously supposed to be a branch of the Ganges. The Mega has been identified with the Hooghly. The Kamberikhon is said to represent the Kobbadak or Kabadak (Kapotāksha), the "Cobbaduck" of Rennell's map, which flows past Jhinkargachha. A more plausible identification would be with the Kumāra (Kumāraka) river which issues out of the Mātābhāngā branch of the Padmā and joining the Gorai, ultimately empties itself into the Haringhātā estuary and the Ārialkhān.[3] The Pseudostomon, "False Mouth," is probably so called as it lay concealed behind numerous islands. It is taken to correspond to

[1] Barua, *IHQ.* 1934, pp. 57 ff; D. R. Bhandarkar, *EI.* XXI. 83 ff; P. C. Sen, *IHQ.* 1933, pp. 722 ff.

[2] Strabo (xv. i. 13) refers to 'a single mouth.'

[3] Hunter, II. 172 ff; v. 261 ff etc.

the estuary of the Padmā and the Meghnā. The Antibole (lit. "thrown-back")[1] is regarded by some as identical with the old Gaṅgā that flows past Dacca. The precise identity must await future research.

The *Milinda-pañho*[2] mentions Vaṅga in a list of maritime countries where ships congregated for purposes of trade. In the Nāgārjunikonda inscriptions[3] we have reference to Vaṅga in connection with the missionary activities of "the masters and fraternities of monks" of Ceylon.

From the fourth century A.D. onwards the epigraphic records which are assignable to distinct chronological periods (such as the Gupta, early post-Gupta, Pāla and Sena ages) enable us to trace more clearly the chief political or geographical divisions and administrative units of Bengal. Unfortunately the boundaries of some of the units cannot be fixed with any degree of certainty, and the difficulty is increased by the fact that the extent of even well-known divisions like Gauḍa, Vaṅga, and Rāḍhā varied in different ages. All that we can do at the present state of our knowledge is to enumerate the more important divisions with short explanatory notes of the various connotations of the names gleaned from epigraphic and literary sources.

GAUḌA

The precise location of Gauḍa, which emerges from obscurity before the sun of the Guptas set for ever, is a matter regarding which there has been considerable divergence of opinion. As already stated, a Gauḍapura is mentioned by Pāṇini. Products of Gauḍa are well known to the *Kauṭilīya Arthaśāstra*.[4] The country is also familiar to Vātsyāyana, the author of the *Kāmasūtra*.[5] We learn from the Haraha inscription[6] of 554 A.D. that Īśānavarman Maukhari forced the Gauḍa people to seek refuge in the sea. This points to a country not very far from the sea-coast.[7] In the seventh

[1] Has it any reference to the action of the Brahmaputra in silting up and *driving back the Ganges?* (Hunter, v. 266).

[2] See *supra* p. 10, f.n. 8. [3] *EI.* xx. 22 ff. [4] Book II. 13.

[5] Benares ed. (Chowkhamba Sanskrit Book Depot), pp. 115, 294.

[6] *EI.* XIV. 117.

[7] It is interesting to recall in this connection the statement of Abu'l-Fazl (*Ain.* II. 120) that the Ganges "after spreading into a thousand channels joins the *sea* at Sātgāon." Fredericke (1570 A.D.) found an "infinite number of ships" at Buttor (Bator) near Sātgāon (Hunter, III. 309). The estuary (cf. Khāḍī of inscriptions) of the Sarasvatī may have been regarded in those days as an arm of the sea. The Gauḍa-*vishaya* lay not very far from it. A few Purāṇas including the *Matsya* refer to the Gauḍa-*deśa* as the territory where a very ancient Ikshvāku king

century A.D. a Gauḍa king had undoubtedly his capital at Karnasuvarṇa near Rungamutty (Rāngāmāti), some twelve miles to the south of Murshidabad.[1]

The *Bṛihat-saṁhitā* of Varāhamihira[2] (sixth century A.D.) clearly restricts Gauḍaka to a part of Bengal which is distinguished not only from Pauṇḍra (North Bengal), Tāmraliptika (part of the Midnapore district), Vaṅga and Samataṭa (Central and Eastern Bengal), but also from Vardhamāna (Burdwan). Curiously enough, the *Bhavishya Purāṇa*[3] defines Gauḍa as a territory lying to the north of Burdwan and south of the Padmā. This corresponds to the kingdom of Gauḍa-Karṇasuvarṇa described by writers of the seventh century A.D. The *Anargha-rāghava*[4] of Murāri (latter half of the eighth century A.D.) mentions Champā as the capital (*rājadhānī*) of the Gauḍas in the time of that poet. This city is probably identical with Champānagarī in the *sarkar* of Madāran mentioned in the *Ain-i-Akbarī*. It stood on the left bank of the Dāmodar, north-west of the city of Burdwan.[5]

The records of the Pāla and the Sena dynasties and of contemporaneous families who held sway from the latter half of the eighth century A.D. to the Muslim conquest, enable us to glean some additional information about Gauḍa and its relation with Vaṅga during the period of their rule. The potentate who exercised supreme sovereignty in Bengal in the time of Nāgabhaṭa II Pratīhāra (first part of the ninth century A.D.) is referred to as Vaṅgapati (lord of Vaṅga) in the Gwalior inscription of Bhoja I,[6] grandson of Nāgabhaṭa II. But from the time of Devapāla, and possibly from that of his father Dharmapāla himself, the contemporary and rival of Nāgabhaṭa II Pratīhāra, and Dhruva and Govinda III Râshṭrakūṭa, the title Gauḍeśvara becomes the official style of the reigning emperors. Gauḍa is, however, still referred to as a *vishaya* or district as we learn from a Kānheri inscription[7] of Amoghavarsha I (814-877 A.D.). The existence of Vaṅga as a political or adminis-

built the city of Śrāvastī. The evidence probably points to Śrāvastī (Sahet Mahet) in Gonda in Kosala or Oudh, and not to the place of that name in Northern Bengal. It is, however, important to note that the expression Gauḍa-*deśa* does not occur in the corresponding text of the *Mahābhārata* and the *Vāyu* and *Brahma Purāṇas*. It is thus an obvious interpolation. In the *Kāmasūtra*, the Kosalas, that is to say, the people of the Śrāvastī region, ruled over by early Ikshvāku kings, are clearly distinguished from the Gauḍas (Raychaudhuri, *PHAI*. 4th ed., pp. 536-537).

[1] Watters, II. 192, 340; Hunter, IX. 92. Cf. *JASB*. 1853, p. 281; 1893, p. 315; 1908, p. 281. See *infra* p. 60.

[2] xiv. 6-8.

[3] *IA*. 1891, p. 419 f.

[4] *JASB*. 1908, p. 279; for the date of the poet see Keith, *The Sanskrit Drama*, p. 225.

[5] Hunter, I. 368.

[6] *EI*. xviii. 108.

[7] *IA*. xiii. 134.

trative unit in the same period is proved by the Nilgund inscription[1] of the same Rāshṭrakūṭa monarch. Gauḍa and Vaṅga are sometimes mentioned side by side as in the Baroda Plates of Karkarāja[2] (811-12 A.D.). But political union under the same sovereign, styled both Vaṅgapati and Gauḍeśvara, was fast making them interchangeable terms. The process was complete in the Mughal and British periods. In a record[3] of the time of Aurangzeb 'Ālamgīr, the *subah* of Bengal, over which Shāyista Khān presided, is referred to as Gauḍa-*maṇḍala*. In the nineteenth century a Bengali poet hailing from the Jessore district in the heart of old Vaṅga, applies to his own countrymen the designation *Gauḍajana*.

Regarding the connection of Gauḍa with Rāḍhā evidence seems to be discrepant. In the *Prabodha-chandrodaya*[4] of Kṛishṇa Miśra (eleventh or twelfth century A.D.), the Gauḍa-*rāshṭra* is said to have included Rāḍhā (or Rāḍhāpurī) and Bhūriśreshṭhika, identified with Bhursut on the banks of the Dāmodar in the Hooghly-Howrah districts. But the Managoli inscription[5] of the Yādava king Jaitugi I distinguishes Lāḷa (Rāḍhā) from Gauḷa (Gauḍa).

According to Jaina writers[6] of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries Gauḍa included Lakshmaṇāvatī in the present Malda district. If the commentator of the *Kāmasūtra* of Vātsyāyana is to be believed, it extended southward as far as Kaliṅga.[7] It may be noted in this connection that the *Śaktisaṅgama-tantra,*[8] a late mediaeval work, extends the country from Vaṅga (Central and Eastern Bengal) to Bhuvaneśa (Orissa). The *Rājataraṅgiṇī*[9] (twelfth century) uses the term in a very extended sense. We find in this work the expression *Pañcha-Gauḍa* which in some texts is taken to embrace, besides Gauḍa proper, the countries known as Sārasvata (Eastern Punjab), Kānyakubja (Gangetic Doab), Mithilā (North Bihar) and Utkala (Northern Orissa).[10] This is reminiscent of the Gauḍa empire of Dharmapāla. But there is no early warrant for the use of the term Gauḍa in this wide sense.

In the early Muslim period the name Gauḍa came to be applied to the city of Lakshmaṇāvatī in the Malda district. It is

[1] *EI.* VI. 103. [2] *IA.* XII. 160. [3] *ASI.* 1922-23, p. 145.

[4] Act. II; *IHQ.* 1928, p. 239; *Bhāratavarsha,* 1338 (B.S.), Śrāvaṇa, p. 230.

[5] *EI.* V. 29; cf. also *Jyotishatatvam* quoted in *Śabdakalpadruma,* pp. 1159-1160 (under *Rāḍhaka*). The *Digvijaya-prakāśa* places Rāḍha-deśa to the west of Gauḍa (*Vasumatī,* 1340, Māgha, p. 610).

[6] *JASB.* 1908, p. 281.

[7] Benares edition, p. 295. The commentator wrote in the thirteenth century (Keith, *A History of Sanskrit Literature,* 460).

[8] 'Gauḍa' in the *Śabdakalpadruma.* [9] IV. 468.

[10] *Skanda Purāṇa* quoted in the *Śabdakalpadruma* (under "Gauḍa").

perhaps this Gauḍa which is at times included within Puṇḍra by some authorities of a late date.[1] There was also a Gauḍa in North Sylhet.[2]

VAṄGA

The earlier references to this famous *janapada* have been noted above. It is mentioned in the Meherauli inscription[3] of Chandra and one of the earliest records of the Chālukyas of Vātāpi.[4] Kālidāsa, the traditional contemporary of Diṅnāga (fifth century A.D.), places the Vaṅgas amidst the streams of the Ganges (*Gaṅgā-sroto'ntara*).[5] The western boundary of their country possibly at times extended beyond the Hooghly to the river Kapiśā or Kāsāi in the Midnapore district. The inclusion within Vaṅga of an area beyond the Hooghly is also vouched for by the Jaina Upāṅga styled the *Prajñāpanā*, which mentions Tāmralipti (Tamluk) as a city of the Vaṅgas.[6] The Tamluk territory is, however, usually mentioned in literature as a distinct region.

Vaṅga of Pāla and Sena records seems to have been a smaller tract than the old territory known to the Jaina *Prajñāpanā* and the *Raghuvaṁśa* of Kālidāsa. It could not have extended as far as Tamluk, as the district beyond the Bhāgīrathī, which was once included within its area, now formed part of the Vardhamāna-*bhukti*. Even a part of the delta embracing Jessore and certain adjoining tracts came to be distinguished as Upavaṅga. This last-mentioned territory is already referred to in the *Bṛihat-saṁhitā* of Varāhamihira.[7] The *Digvijaya-prakāśa*,[8] a mediaeval work assigned to *cir.* 1600 A.D., places in Upavaṅga Jessore and some other tracts abounding in forest (*Upavaṅge Yaśorādyāḥ deśāḥ kānana-saṁyutāḥ*). Vaṅga proper was now restricted to the eastern part of the Gangetic delta. If the *Abhidhāna-chintāmaṇi*[9] of Hemachandra and the *Jayamaṅgalā*[10] of Yaśodhara are to be believed, it was identified

[1] *Bhavishya Purāṇa*, *IA*. 1891, p. 419; cf. *Śabdakalpadruma* (quoting the *Trikāṇḍaśesha*) under "Varendrī." It is, however, to be noted that the *Purāṇa* places Gauḍa *south* of the Padmā.

[2] *JASB*. 1873, p. 236.

[3] Fleet, *CII*. III. 141.

[4] The Mahākūṭa Pillar inscription. *IA*. XIX. 7 ff.

[5] *Raghuvaṁśa*, IV. 36.

[6] *IA*. 1891, p. 375.

[7] XIV. 8. Jaṭhara of the passage has been identified with *Jaṭār Deul* (S. Mitra. *Yaśohar-Khulnār Itihāsa*, 69).

[8] S. Mitra, *op. cit.* 4, 132.

[9] *Bhūmikāṇḍa, Vaṅgāstu Harikeliyāḥ.*

[10] *Vaṅgā Lohityāt pūrveṇa* (Benares ed., pp. 294-95). It may be noted in

with or included some territory on the east of the Brahmaputra. Hemachandra actually equates the people of Vaṅga with the inhabitants of Harikelī (Sylhet ?).[1]

In the later Pāla period Vaṅga was divided into two parts, northern and southern (*anuttara*). It is to be noted that the sister province of Rāḍhā was also from the ninth or tenth century A.D. divided into two regions styled *Uttara*-Rāḍhā and *Dakshiṇa*-Rāḍhā.[2] *Anuttara* or southern Vaṅga is distinctly referred to in the Kamauli Grant[3] of Vaidyadeva, a minister of Kumārapāla. The two divisions of Vaṅga implied in Vaidyadeva's Grant may have corresponded roughly to the two *bhāgas* of the same territory mentioned in later Sena inscriptions, namely the Vikramapura-*bhāga* and Nāvya.

Of the two sub-divisions of Vaṅga, the Vikramapura-*bhāga* is well-known. But in the Sena period it seems to have embraced a wider area than the modern *parganā* of Vikrampur in the Dacca Division watered by the Padmā. It seems to have stretched southward as far as the Koṭālipāḍā and Edilpur *Parganās*.

Nāvya as a sub-division of Vaṅga is mentioned in the Madhyapāḍā Plate of Viśvarūpasena.[4] A recent writer regarded Nānya-maṇḍala of the Rāmpāl Plate as a mistake for Nāvya-maṇḍala.[5] He further identified Nehakāshṭhi in that *maṇḍala* with Naikāṭhi in the Bākarganj district. The record of Viśvarūpasena includes in the Nāvya region the Rāmasiddhipāṭaka which has been identified by the writer mentioned above with a village in the Gaurnadi area of Bākarganj. In the east Nāvya extended to the sea *i.e.* the head of the Bay and the estuary of the Meghnā.[6]

Nāvya, which means "accessible by a boat or ship," is a fitting designation of the south-eastern part of the Gangetic delta which is a labyrinth of rivers and creeks. As *Nāvyam* has the sense of *newness*, one is reminded of Navyāvakāśikā (*lit.* new intermediate space or opening) of the Faridpur Grants of the sixth century A.D.[7] The two places may have been connected with each other. But the data at our disposal are too scanty to warrant any definite conclusion regarding the matter.

this connection that Sonārgāon, the chief city of Vaṅga during the early Muslim period, is situated about 2 miles inland from the Brahmaputra creek (Hunter, v. 71 and the map in the volume).

1 *EHBP*. I. IV.

2 *EI*. XXIII. 74, 105.

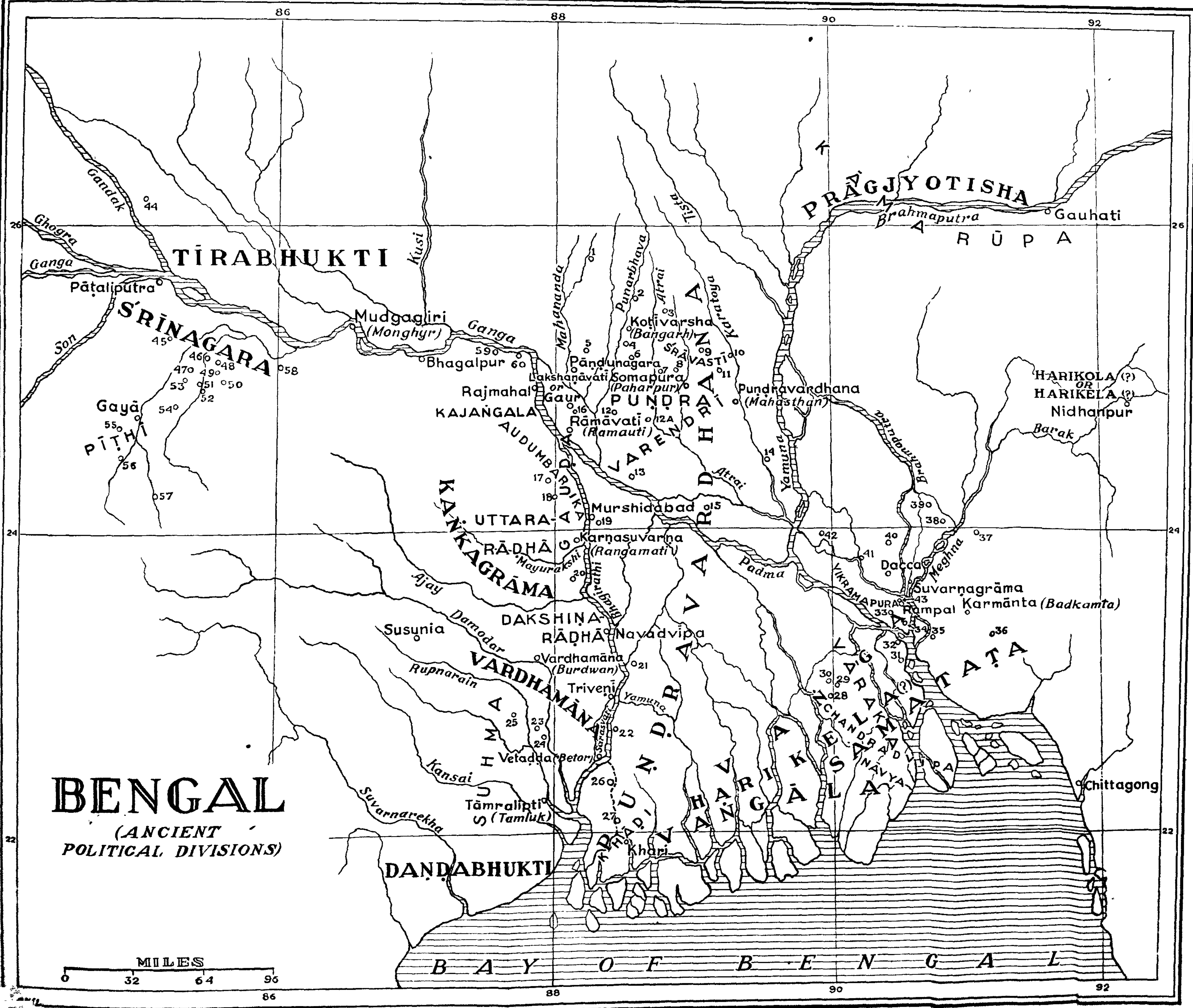
3 *GL*. 140.

4 *IB*. 146, 194.

5 J. Ghosh, *Pañchapushpa*, 1339 (B.S.), Phālguna, p. 362.

6 *IB*. 142, 146.

7 *IA*. 1910, p. 200; *DR*. 1920, pp. 42, 87; *EI*. XVIII. 76



1. Rāmgunj
2. Dinajpur
3. Dāmodarpur
4. Manahali
5. Jājilpārā
6. Tarpaṇdīghi
7. Āmgāchhi
8. Bādāl
9. Baigrām
10. Ghorāghāt
11. Silimpur
12. Nimdīghi
12A. Kauśāmbī
13. Deopārā
14. Mādhāinagar
15. Dhanāidaha
16. Khālimpur
17. Pāikor
18. Sāgardīghi
19. Śaktipur
20. Naihāṭi
21. Ānuliā
22. Barrackpur
23. Mallyā
24. Bhūriśreshṭhi (Bhursut)
25. Apara-Mandāra (Mandaran)
26. Gobindapur
27. Bakultalā
28. Madanpāḍā
29. Ghughrāhāti
30. Koṭālipāḍā
31. Edilpur
32. Kedārpur
33. Madhyapāḍā
34. Ādābāḍī
35. Mehār
36. Deulbāḍī
37. Bāghāurā
38. Ashrafpur
39. Belāva
40. Bhāwāl (Bhowal)
41. Sābhār
42. Dhullā
43. Pāikpārā
44. Imādpur
45. Hilsā
46. Uddaṇḍapura (Bihar)
47. Nālandā
48. Tetrāwan
49. Ghoshrāwā
50. Aphsaḍ
51. Chaṇḍimau
52. Giriyek
53. Rājagriha (Rajgir)
54. Kurkihār
55. Bodh-Gayā
56. Guneriā
57. Itkhauri
58. Jaynagar
59. Teliāghari
60. Sakrigali

Samataṭa

This territory finds mention in the Allahabad Pillar inscription of Samudragupta and later records. Its exact limits in the Gupta age are not known. The *Bṛihat-saṁhitā*,[1] a work of the sixth century A.D., distinguishes it from Vaṅga. The narrative in the record of Hiuen Tsang in the next century describes it as a low and a moist country on the sea-side that lay to the south of Kāmarūpa (in Assam). It was more than three thousand *li i.e.* about 500 British miles in circuit and its capital was about twenty *li i.e.* about 3⅓ miles in circuit. If the identification of Rājabhaṭa, king of Samataṭa, mentioned by Far Eastern travellers, with Rājarāja-bhaṭṭa of the Ashrafpur Plates be correct, then it is possible that in the seventh century A.D., Samataṭa had a royal residence at Karmānta.[2] This place has been identified with Baḍkāmtā in the district of Tippera, situated twelve miles west of Comilla. The connection of Samataṭa with the Tippera district in later ages is clearly established by the Bāghāurā image inscription of the time of Mahīpāla, and the Mehār copper-plate of Dāmodaradeva, dated 1234 A.D. Hiuen Tsang's description suggests that in his time it may have included within its political boundaries a part of Central Bengal in addition to Tippera. A descriptive label attached to a picture of Lokanātha in a certain illustrated manuscript places Champitalā in the Tippera district in Samataṭa.[3]

Harikela

Writers of the seventh century mention, beside the land described above, a country called Harikela. According to I-tsing[4] it was the eastern limit of East India. The evidence of the Chinese writer is confirmed by that of the *Karpūra-mañjarī* (ninth century A.D.) which includes Harikela girls among women of the east:

> "Thou gallant of the women of the East, thou *champak*-bloom ear-ornament of the town of Champā, thou whose lustre transcends the loveliness of Rāḍhā, who hast conquered Kāmarūpa by thy prowess, who providest merry-makings (*keli*) for Harikelī."[5]

In the epigraphic records of the Chandra dynasty of Eastern Bengal, Trailokyachandra, ruler of Chandradvīpa (Bākarganj district), is described as the mainstay of the king of Harikela. The lexicographer Hemachandra identifies Harikelī, apparently the city of

[1] xiv. 6-8.
[2] Foucher, *Icon.* 102, pl. IV. 3; *Bhatt. Cat.* 12.
[3] See *infra* pp. 86-87.
[4] *I-tsing.* XLVI.
[5] Konow and Lanman's ed. and tr. (*HOS*), pp. 296-97.

Harikela, with Vaṅga.[1] It has been recently pointed out by a young writer that the *Mañjuśrī-mūlakalpa* mentions Harikela, Vaṅga, and Samataṭa as distinct entities and that in two manuscripts in the Dacca University collection, Harikola, that is possibly Harikela, is synonymous with Sylhet.[2] The evidence of the *Mañjuśrī-mūlakalpa* need not, however, be taken to suggest that Harikela was dissociated from Vaṅga in all ages. The case of Tāmralipta suggests that a *janapada* which is mentioned as a separate kingdom by one authority may have formed part of a neighbouring realm in a different epoch.

CHANDRADVĪPA

Chandradvīpa is mentioned in the Rāmpāl copper-plate inscription as the name of the territory ruled over by Trailokyachandra (tenth or eleventh century A.D.). The famous Tārā image of Chandradvīpa is illustrated in a manuscript dated 1015 A.D.[3] In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries it was the name of a small principality in the district of Bākarganj of which the capital was at first at Kachua and subsequently removed to Madhavpasa.[4] It is identified with the *parganā* of Baglā (Bāklā) in the *sarkar* of the same name mentioned in the *Ain-i-Akbari*.[5]

The Madhyapāḍā inscription of Viśvarūpasena mentions two interesting place-names. These are "Bāṅgālabaḍā" and "-ndradvīpa." The last name has been restored by different scholars as Kandradvīpa, Indradvīpa and Chandradvīpa. The reading Chandradvīpa is supported by the fact that the territory in question included Ghāgharakāṭṭī-pāṭaka. As is well-known, Ghāghar is the name of a stream that flowed past Phullaśrī in north-west Bākarganj in the days of the poet Vijayagupta (fifteenth century A.D.). It exists to the present day.

VAṄGĀLA

Bāṅgālabaḍā[6] stood to the south of Rāmasiddhi mentioned above which has been identified with a place in Gaurnadi in the Bākarganj district. The name can scarcely be dissociated from Vaṅgāla-deśa mentioned in epigraphic and literary records since the eleventh century A.D. It was Vaṅgāla, rather than Vaṅga, that

[1] See *supra* p. 15, f.n. 9.
[2] *EHBP.* I. iii-iv.
[3] Foucher, *Icon.* 135-37; *Bhatt. Cat.* 12 ff.
[4] H. Beveridge, *The District of Bakarganj*, 72 ff.
[5] *Ibid.* 70; *Ain.* II. 123, 134.
[6] For *Vaḍā*=house see *IHQ.* 1939, p. 140.

gave its name to the great eastern *subah* of the Mughal empire that stretched from Chittagong to Garhi, and to the great Presidency of British India round Fort William. Abu'l-Fazl apparently regarded Vaṅga and Vaṅgāla as identical. He says:

> "The original name of Bengal was *Bang*. Its former rulers raised mounds measuring ten yards in height and twenty in breadth throughout the province which were called *āl*. From this suffix, the name Bengal took its rise and currency."[1]

But Vaṅga and Vaṅgāla are mentioned separately in several inscriptions of South India and the *Tarikh-i-Firuzshahi* of Shams-i-Sirāj 'Afif.[2] Though a Vaṅgāla army advanced as far as Pāhārpur in the Rajshahi district in the eleventh century A.D.[3] and the dominions of the Chandra kings of Vaṅgāla embraced, according to tradition,[4] Paṭṭikerā and Mṛikula or Mehārakula in Tippera as well as Rangpur and Chittagong, the home territory of the Vaṅgālas does not seem to have lain in any of these areas. In a book dealing with the Maynāmatī-Gopīchānd legend we have pointed reference to Vaṅgāla *Langobardi* hailing from Bhāṭi: "*Bhāṭi haite āila Vāṅgāla lambā lambā dāḍi.*[5]

Bhāṭi, *lit.* "downstream," "land of the ebb-tide," is the name given to the low-lying flats of the Gangetic delta that border on the great estuaries. Tāranātha refers to "Bati" as an island-realm near the mouth of the Ganges.[6] Abu'l-Fazl confines the Bhāṭi to 'the tract of country on the east' of the *subah* of Bengal.[7] The name is still used to denote the Sundarban region of the districts of Bākarganj and Khulna. The derivation of the name Vaṅgāla (Vaṅga + *āl*, from *āli*, "dike") supports its identification with the part of old Vaṅga (not the whole as stated by Abu'l-Fazl) intersected by *khāls* and creeks, and abounding in dikes and bridges, that was known as Bhāṭi in the days of Akbar and Tāranātha. It is in this area that Gastaldi (1561 A.D.) places his "Bengala." European writers of the seventeenth century place "Bengala" further to the east. But their evidence, valuable as it is for the contemporaneous period, does not carry the same weight as that of Gastaldi for the earlier ages.[8]

[1] *Ain.* II. 120. [2] *EI.* v. 257; *EHBP.* I. v; *E & D.* III. 295.
[3] *EI.* XXI. 98.
[4] *Maynāmatīr Gān* (Dacca Sāhitya Parishad); Hunter, VII. 312; *JASB.* 1898, p. 22. *Bhatt. Cat.* 10-11; *EI.* XVII. 351.
[5] *Mānikchandra Rājār Gān*, 12. *JASB.* 1878, p. 150.
[6] *IA.* IV (1875), p. 366. [7] *Ain.* II. 116.
[8] *JASB.* 1908, p. 292; Raychaudhuri, *SIA.* 189-190; R. Mookerjee, *The Changing Face of Bengal*, Pl. III-IV (List of Maps). For other views and a detailed discussion on Vaṅgāla, cf. *IHQ.* XVI. 225 ff.

PUṆḌRA AND VARENDRĪ

Mention has already been made of the Puṇḍras, a people known to later Vedic texts and the Great Epic. The *Digvijaya* section of the *Mahābhārata* places them to the east of Monghyr and associates them with the prince who ruled on the banks of the Kosi. This accords with the evidence of Gupta epigraphs and the records of the Chinese writers which agree in placing the territory of the Puṇḍras—then styled Puṇḍravardhana—in North Bengal. The distinction drawn by some writers between the Puṇḍras and the Pauṇḍras and the location of the Pauṇḍras to the east of Prayāga and west of Magadha[1] lack corroboration by Gupta epigraphs and is not countenanced by the testimony of Chinese pilgrims.

Varendrī or Varendrī-*maṇḍala* was the metropolitan district of the Puṇḍravardhana territory, as the city of Pauṇḍravardhana-*pura*—the Puṇḍra-*nagara* of an old Brāhmī inscription—was situated within its area. The form Varendra (-ī) -maṇḍala occurs in the Talcher Grant[2] of Gayāḍatuṅgadeva and the *Kavi-praśasti* of the *Rāmacharita* of Sandhyākara Nandī. The latter definitely locates it between the Ganges and the Karatoyā. Its inclusion within Puṇḍravardhana is proved by the Silimpur, Tarpandighi and Madhainagar inscriptions. The *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī* mentions Bārind as a wing of the territory of Lakhnawati on the eastern side of the Ganges. The evidence of Indian literature and inscriptions proves that it included considerable portions of the present Bogra, Rajshahi and Dinajpur districts. An important part of Varendrī was apparently known as Sāvatthi or Śrāvastī. This territory included Baigram near Hili in the Dinajpur district, Kroḍañja or Kolañcha (in Dinajpur or Bogra) and a place called Tarkāri which was separated from Bālagrāma in Varendrī by Sakaṭī, apparently a river.[3] Among other localities of Varendrī may be mentioned Bhāvagrāma, Belahishṭi, Kāntāpura and Nāṭāri.[4] The first two I am unable to identify. Kāntāpura reminds one of Kāntanagara of the Dinajpur district, while Nāṭāri is undoubtedly Nator in the district of Rajshahi. Varendrī may have also included Paduvanvā which some writers identify with Pabna.[5]

RĀḌHĀ

This far-famed territory was, like Vaṅga, divided into two parts *viz.*, Dakshiṇa- or South Rāḍhā and Uttara- or North Rāḍhā. This

[1] Sastri, *Cat.* IV. 57.

[2] *JASB.* N.S. XII. 293.

[3] *EI.* XIII. 290; *Kām. Śās.* 137, 155 and errata; *ASI.* 1930-34, Part II. 257-58; *IC.* II. 358.

[4] *GL.* 133; *IB.* 100, 108; *IA.* 1891, p. 420.

[5] See *infra* Ch. VI. § 6.

mode of division which can be traced back to the ninth century A.D. apparently replaces the older segmentation of the area into Vajjabhūmi and Subbhabhūmi.

DAKSHIṆA-RĀḌHĀ

This part of Rāḍhā is mentioned in the Gaonri Plates[1] of Vākpati Muñja (981 A.D.). Ten years later it is referred to in the *Nyāyakandalī* of Śrīdharāchārya.[2] It figures in Choḷa records of 1023-25 as Takkaṇalāḍam. Among other references may be mentioned those in the Amareśvara Temple inscription[3] of Māndhātā (Nimar district in the Central Provinces), composed by Halāyudha, the *Prabodha-chandrodaya*[4] of Krishṇa Miśra and the *Chaṇḍī* of Kavikaṅkana Mukundarāma.[5] According to these records Dakshiṇa-Rāḍhā included Bhūrisrishṭi or Bhūriśreshṭhika (modern Bhursut) and Navagrāma in the Howrah and Hooghly districts, as well as Dāmunyā (to the west of the Dāmodar) in the Burdwan district. It is clear from this that the territory in question embraced considerable portions of Western Bengal lying between the Ajay and the Dāmodar rivers. The southern boundary may have reached the Rupnārāyan and the western boundary may have extended beyond the Dāmodar far into the Arambagh sub-division. Tradition, however, recorded in the *Digvijaya-prakāśa,* restricts Rāḍhā to the territory lying *north* of the Dāmodar (*Dāmodar-ottare bhāge..... Rāḍhadeśaḥ prakīrtitaḥ*).[6] Closely connected with Dakshiṇa-Rāḍhā as a territory subject to the same ruling family (Śūra) was Apara-Mandāra, perhaps identical with Ma(n)dāran in the Arambagh sub-division of Hooghly.

UTTARA-RĀḌHĀ-MAṆḌALA

The northern part of the famous land of Rāḍhā was known as Uttara-Rāḍhā (*Uttiralāḍam* of Choḷa inscriptions) at least as early as the time of the Gaṅga king Devendravarman. This fact is known from the Indian Museum Plates[7] of the Gaṅga year 308 which possibly falls in the ninth century A.D. The district is also known from the Belāva and Naihāti Grants. The last mentioned

[1] *EI*. XXIII. 105.
[2] Hiralal, *Inss. in C.P. and Berar* (2nd ed.), p. 72; *IC*. I. 502 f.
[3] *JASB*. 1912, p. 341.
[4] Act. II.
[5] See *supra* p. 10, f.n. 6 and p. 14, f.n. 5.
[6] Cal. Univ. ed., Pt. I. p. 20.
[7] *EI*. XXIII. 74.

record includes it within the Vardhamāna-*bhukti*. But in the time of Lakshmaṇasena it formed part of the Kaṅkagrāma-*bhukti*.[1]

Among places mentioned in inscriptions[2] as being situated in Uttara-Rāḍhā, Siddhalagrāma has been identified with Siddhangram in the Birbhum district, and Vāllahiṭṭhā with Bālutiyā on the northern borders of the Burdwan district. The Śaktipur Grant of Lakshmaṇasena suggests that the *maṇḍala* of Uttara-Rāḍhā also embraced villages in the Kandi sub-division of Murshidabad.

The river Ajay is usually regarded as constituting the boundary line between north and south Rāḍhā. But the inclusion of a part of the Katwa sub-division within Uttara-Rāḍhā may imply that at times the Khari, rather than the Ajay, separated northern Rāḍhā from southern Rāḍhā. As to the northern limits of the Uttara-Rāḍhā-*maṇḍala*, it has already been stated above that the Jaina *Prajñāpanā* knows Koṭīvarsha or Bāngarh in the Dinajpur district as a city in Rāḍhā. The *Chandraprabhā* of Bharata Mallika refers to a part of Rāḍhā which lay north of the Ganges (*Uttara-Gaṅga-Rāḍhām*).[3] It is, however, clear from contemporary inscriptions and the *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī* that in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the Ganges formed the boundary between "Ral and the city of Lakhan-or" on the one hand, and "Barind and the city of Diw-kot on the other."[4]

Tāmralipta (-lipti) or Dāmalipta

Tāmralipta is already known to the *Mahābhārata*. In the *Digvijaya* section of the *Sabhāparvan* it is distinguished not only from territories known to have been situated in Northern, Eastern and Central Bengal, but also from Suhma. This state of things changed in later ages when Tāmralipti is represented as having formed a part of Vaṅga in the time of the Jaina *Prajñāpanā*, and of Suhma in the days of Daṇḍin, the author of the *Daśakumāra-charita*. The core of the territory lay in the modern Midnapore district and its capital has been identified with Tamalites of Ptolemy, the modern Tamluk. In the days of Hiuen Tsang it lay over 900 *li*, that is about 150 miles, from Samataṭa and was about 1400 *li* (about 233 miles) in circuit. "The land was low and moist," forming a bay where land and water communication met.

Having surveyed the chief traditional political and geographical divisions of Bengal, we may now refer to the administrative units

[1] *EI.* XXI. 218.
[2] p. 55.
[3] *JRAS.* 1935, p. 99; *IB.* 71.
[4] *Nāsirī.* I. 584-86.

of the province in different periods. Epigraphic records enable us to determine with a tolerable degree of certainty the approximate location of at least the more important divisions, called *bhuktis*. The term *bhukti*, which we first find in the Gupta records, literally means an 'allotment' but was applied to denote the biggest administrative unit within a kingdom or empire.

A *bhukti* was usually divided into smaller areas styled *vishaya*, *maṇḍala* or *vīthi*. *Vishaya* and *maṇḍala* are sometimes used as synonymous terms. Khāḍī, which is referred to as a *vishaya* in the Barrackpore Grant, is styled a *maṇḍala* in the Sundarban Plate of Lakshmaṇasena. But a *vishaya* is at times included within a *maṇḍala*. Conversely a *maṇḍala* is at times a sub-division of a *vishaya*. The Khalimpur Plate of Dharmapāla refers to the Mahantāprakāśa-*vishaya* apparently as a part of the Vyāghrataṭī-*maṇḍala*. On the other hand, the Bangarh inscription refers to the Gokalikā-*maṇḍala* as a part of the Koṭīvarsha-*vishaya*.

The terms *vishaya* and *maṇḍala* were in rare cases possibly used to denote the same administrative division as *bhukti*. Thus Magadha which is styled a *vishaya* in the colophon of a manuscript of the *Ashṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*[1] written in the fifteenth year of Rāmapāla, is styled a *bhukti* in a Nālandā Seal inscription.[2] It is, however, possible that the Magadha-*vishaya* was only a part of the Magadha-*bhukti*. In the Irdā inscription Daṇḍa-*bhukti* is referred to as a *maṇḍala* of the Vardhamāna-*bhukti*. Apparently we have to class *bhuktis* into two groups, namely major *bhuktis* and minor *bhuktis*. The latter were at times equated with *maṇḍalas*.

The denotation of the term *vīthi* in the Gupta age is not clear. In later times it appears as a sub-division of the *bhukti* as well as the *maṇḍala*. Other sub-divisions of *maṇḍalas* referred to in epigraphs are *khaṇḍala*, *āvṛitti*, and apparently, *bhāga*. The *āvṛitti* was further sub-divided into *chaturakas* and the latter into *pāṭakas*. The *chaturaka* is mentioned in certain grants as a sub-division of a *maṇḍala*, and the *pāṭaka*, of a *bhāga*. The *pāṭaka* seems to have been the lowest administrative unit. Hemachandra defines it as one-half of a *grāma* or village.

Inscriptions of the Gupta age disclose or imply the existence of three *bhuktis* in the area now known as Bengal *viz.*, Puṇḍra-vardhana, Vardhamāna, and an unnamed *bhukti* which included Suvarṇa-vīthi and Navyāvakāśikā. The first two of these along with five others *viz.*, Tīra-*bhukti*, Śrīnagara-*bhukti*, Kaṅkagrāma-*bhukti*, Daṇḍa-*bhukti* and Prāgjyotisha-*bhukti* are known from the

[1] *BI.* 269; *PB.* 93. [2] *ASI.* 1927-28, p. 139.

Pāla and Sena records to have formed parts of the Gauḍa empire. Of these Tīra-*bhukti* (Tirhut in North Bihar), Śrīnagara-*bhukti* or Magadha-*bhukti* (in South Bihar), and Prāgjyotisha-*bhukti* (in Assam) in the main lay beyond the limits of Bengal proper. An old *bhukti* was sometimes incorporated with a neighbouring division, and a new *bhukti* carved out of an older one. In the Irda record of the tenth century A.D., Daṇḍa-*bhukti* forms part of the Vardhamāna-*bhukti*. In the time of Lakshmaṇasena the northern part of the Vardhamāna-*bhukti*, together perhaps with some adjacent tracts, was constituted into a separate administrative division styled Kaṅkagrāma-*bhukti*.

We now proceed to give a brief account of the *bhuktis* included within Bengal proper with the sub-divisions or smaller units into which they were split up for administrative purposes.

I. Puṇḍravardhana-bhukti

It is mentioned in Gupta epigraphs ranging from the years 124 to 224 that is from 444 to 544 A.D. In the records of the Pāla-Sena age it is variously styled Puṇḍra- or Pauṇḍra-vardhana or simply Pauṇḍra-*bhukti*. It seems to have been the biggest administrative division or province of the Gauḍa empire. It extended from the summit of the Himālayas (*Himavach-chhikhara* of a Damodarpur Plate) in the north to Khāḍī in the Sundarban region in the south. The Bhāgīrathī (Jāhnavī) separated it from the Vardhamāna-*bhukti* in the west. The Madhyapāḍā Plate of Viśvarūpasena extends its eastern boundary to the sea, apparently the Bay of Bengal and the estuary of the Meghnā. According to the Mehar copper-plate, dated 1234 A.D., it comprised even a part of the district of Tippera.

The *bhukti* was divided into several *vishayas* and *maṇḍalas* of which twenty-four find mention in known epigraphs. These were:

1-2. Vyāghrataṭī-*Maṇḍala* to which was attached the Mahantāprakāśa-*Vishaya*.
3-5. Sthālīkkaṭa-*Vishaya* to which was attached the Āmra-shaṇḍikā-*Maṇḍala* near the Uḍragrāma-*Maṇḍala*.
6. Kuddālakhāta-*Vishaya*.
7-9. Koṭīvarsha-*Vishaya* in which were included the Gokalikā- and Halāvarta-*Maṇḍalas*.
10. Brāhmaṇīgrāma-*Maṇḍala*.
11. Nānya-*Maṇḍala*.
12-13. Khediravallī-*Vishaya* which included the Vallīmuṇḍā-*Maṇḍala*.

14-15. Ikkaḍāsī-*Vishaya* which included the Yolā-*Maṇḍala.*
16-17. Saṭaṭapadmāvāṭī-*Vishaya* in which was included the Kumāratālaka-*Maṇḍala.*
18. Pañchavāsa-*Maṇḍala.*
19. Adhaḥpattana-*Maṇḍala.*
20. Khāḍī-*Vishaya* or -*Maṇḍala.*
21. Varendra- or Varendrī-*Maṇḍala.*
22. Vaṅga which included the Vikramapura-*Bhāga* and Nāvya.
23-24. Samataṭa-*Maṇḍala* which included the Paraṇāyi-*Vishaya.*

Nos. 1–6, 8–15, 17–18 and 24 do not admit of precise identification and Nos. 21–23 have been dealt with above. The theory that equates the Vyāghrataṭī-*maṇḍala* with Bāgḍi is not based upon any convincing evidence. No. 7, Koṭīvarsha-*vishaya,* is already mentioned in Gupta inscriptions. The city from which it derives its name is referred to in the *Vāyu Purāṇa.* The Jaina *Prajñāpanā* places it in Rāḍhā (Lāḍha). But Gupta and Pāla inscriptions invariably include it within the Puṇḍravardhana-*bhukti.* The head-quarters of the *vishaya* have been identified with the mediaeval Diw-kot (Devakoṭa or Devīkoṭa). The ruins of the city are found about eighteen miles south of Dinajpur town in the village of Bāngarh. Several names of the famous city are mentioned by lexicographers *e.g.* Umā (Ushā-?) vana, Bāṇapura and Śonitapura.

No. 16 was apparently situated on the banks of the river Padmā. The name of the *vishaya* is important as furnishing evidence of the early use of the name Padmā for the main eastern branch of the Ganges.

The Adhaḥpattana-*maṇḍala* included the Kauśāmbī-Ashṭagachchha-*khaṇḍala.* This Kauśāmbī has been identified by some writers with Kusumba in the Rajshahi district. Hunter apparently refers to it as Kusumbi *tappā* (fiscal division).[1]

Khāḍī, *lit.* estuary, is referred to as a *vishaya* in the Barrackpore Grant of Vijayasena and as a *maṇḍala* in the Sundarban Grant of Lakshmaṇasena. It is known to the *Ḍākārṇava*[2] as one of the sixty-four *pīṭhas* or sacred seats and is distinguished from Rāḍhā (West Bengal), Vaṅgāla (which includes the south-eastern part of deltaic Bengal), and Harikela (easternmost part of Bengal). The name survives in the Khāḍī *parganā* of the Diamond Harbour sub-division of the district of Twenty-Four Parganas. Land in this area was, in the days of Vijayasena, measured according to the *nala* (reed) standard adopted in Samataṭa. This has been taken to

[1] Hunter, VIII. 120.

[2] *IB.* 60-61.

indicate that Khāḍī was included within the Samataṭa country. But this is not a necessary inference. The services of land-measurers from Samataṭa may have been requisitioned by the Sena kings in the area under review as those of Samataṭa engravers were utilised by Nārāyaṇapāla and Gopāla II in a preceding age.

Khāḍī or Khāṭikā was split up into two parts by the Ganges. The eastern part, Pūrva-khāṭikā or Khāḍī proper, was included within the Puṇḍravardhana-*bhukti*. But Paśchima-khāṭikā which lay to the west of the Bhāgīrathī in the present Howrah district was a sub-division of the Vardhamāna-*bhukti*.

II. Suvarṇavīthi-Navyāvakāśikā

In the Gupta age Vaṅga does not seem to have formed part of the Puṇḍravardhana-*bhukti* but constituted the domain of a separate *Uparika* or governor who was probably stationed at Navyāvakāśikā. The official designation of the province in question is, however, not definitely known to us. One part of it, where stood the provincial head-quarters, is apparently referred to as Suvarṇavīthi in the Ghugrāhāṭi copper-plate inscription of Samāchāradeva.[1] The *Uparika* in charge of Suvarṇavīthi was the immediate superior of the *Vishayapati* (district officer) of Vāraka-*maṇḍala*. The district of Vāraka extended as far as the eastern sea (*prāk samudra*, apparently the head of the Bay of Bengal together with the estuary of the Meghnā) and included Dhruvilāṭī, identified with Dhulat near Faridpur town.

It has been suggested that Navyāvakāśikā is to be identified with the ruins at Sabhar in the Dacca district.[2] But Suvarṇavīthi which apparently included Navyāvakāśikā reminds one of Suvarṇa-grāma (Sonārgāon), and not Sabhar. It has, however, to be admitted that there is no dated reference to Sonārgāon before the thirteenth century A.D.[3]

III. Vardhamāna-bhukti

It is mentioned in the Mallasarul Plate of the sixth century A.D., the Irda Grant of the tenth century, and the Naihāti and Govindapur

[1] *EI.* XVIII. 74 ff. Dr. R. G. Basak holds that Suvarṇavīthi was the name of the headquarters and Navyāvakāśikā, that of the province (*HNI.* 192). But the use of the term *vīthi* as an administrative area, as noted above and below, does not support this view.

[2] *EI.* XVIII. 85.

[3] Suvarṇa-vīthi may have reference to the entire area in the south-eastern part of the Dacca district which includes, besides Suvarṇa-grāma, such places as Sonākāndi and Sonārang (*vide* map in Hunter, v).

Grants of the twelfth century. It embraced the valley of the Damodar river and is known to have included the Uttara-Rāḍhā and Daṇḍabhukti-*maṇḍalas*. At times it stretched from the river Mor in the north to the Suvarṇarekhā in the south. It is doubtful if it covered an equally extensive area as early as the sixth century A.D. Varāhamihira distinguishes it not only from Tāmraliptika (in Midnapore), but also from Gauḍaka (possibly corresponding to Murshidabad and parts of Burdwan, Birbhum and Malda districts).

Towards the east, the *bhukti* extended as far as the western branch of the Ganges, now known as the Hooghly. In the tenth century the southern boundary extended to the lower reaches of the Suvarṇarekhā. About the middle of the twelfth century the northern boundary is known to have extended beyond the river Ajay so as to embrace within its limits the village of Vāllahiṭṭhā situated in the Uttara-Rāḍhā-*maṇḍala*. In the time of Lakshmaṇasena (last quarter of the twelfth century) Uttara-Rāḍhā formed part of the Kaṅkagrāma-*bhukti*.

The main sub-divisions of the Vardhamāna-*bhukti* as may be determined from known inscriptions of the Pāla-Sena period are as follows :—

(1) Daṇḍa-Bhukti-Maṇḍala.
(2) Paśchima-Khāṭikā.
(3) Dakshiṇa-Rāḍhā.
(4) Uttara-Rāḍhā-Maṇḍala.

The last two sub-divisions have been noticed above. Dakshiṇa-Rāḍhā is not expressly included within the Vardhamāna-*bhukti* in any official record of the period. But its inclusion is implied by the well-known fact that in the sixth century A.D. the Vardhamāna-*bhukti* embraced the valley of the Damodar and from the tenth to about the middle of the twelfth century the *bhukti* extended from the valley of the Ajay in the north to that of the Suvarṇarekhā in the south.

The Daṇḍa-Bhukti-Maṇḍala is referred to in the Irdā inscription and also in the *Rāmacharita* of Sandhyākara. It is doubtless identical with Tandabutti, "in whose gardens bees abounded," referred to in Choḷa inscriptions of 1023-25 A.D. Daṇḍa-Bhukti has been identified by scholars with the marchland between Orissa and Bengal corresponding to the southern and south-western part of the Midnapore district. The name is said to survive in modern Dāntan not far from the river Suvarṇarekhā.

Paśchima-khāṭikā is known from the Govindapur Plate of Lakshmaṇasena. It is apparently distinguished from Pūrva-khāṭikā which is referred to in the Sundarban Plate of Śrīmaḍommaṇapāla, dated 1196 A.D. The river Ganges (Hooghly) doubtless formed

the boundary line between the two parts of Khāṭikā or Khāḍī. As already stated above, Khāḍī was a well-known *vishaya* in the early Sena period. Its eastern part was included in the Puṇḍravardhana-*bhukti*.

Paśchima-khāṭikā included Betaḍḍa-*chaturaka* which has been identified with Betaḍ in the Howrah district.[1] The sub-division may have been carved out of Dakshiṇa-Rāḍhā.

IV. KAṄKAGRĀMA-BHUKTI

It has been stated above that in the days of Lakshmaṇasena northern Rāḍhā was attached to the Kaṅkagrāma-*bhukti*. The place Kaṅkagrāma, from which the *bhukti* derives its name, is identified by one writer with Kānkjol near Rājmahal.[2] Other writers recognise in Kaṅkagrāma the village Kagram in the Bharatpur *thana* of the Murshidabad district.[3] The only facts that may be regarded as beyond dispute are that the new *bhukti* embraced considerable portions of the valley of the Mor river. It doubtless included parts of the Birbhum and Murshidabad districts. It is difficult to say how far it extended in the direction of the present Santal Parganas and the ancient territory of Audumbarika or Audambar mentioned in the Vappaghoshavāṭa inscription and the *Ain-i-Akbari*. The *sarkar* of Audambar stretched from the southern boundary of Purnea to Murshidabad and Birbhum. It included Akmahal (modern Rājmahal) and may have embraced 'Ka-chu-wen-ki-lo' (Kajaṅgala-*maṇḍala*) mentioned by Hiuen Tsang and Sandhyākara. In the time of Jayanāga of the Vappaghoshavāṭa inscription, the Audumbarika-*vishaya* apparently formed part of the realm of Karṇasuvarṇa. It is possible that the new *bhukti* of Kaṅkagrāma represents the old kingdom of Gauḍa-Karṇasuvarṇa mentioned by Varāhamihira, Bāṇa and Hiuen Tsang.

The Kaṅkagrāma-*bhukti* included a number of administrative areas styled *vīthi*. In the Vardhamāna-*bhukti*, the *maṇḍala* came between the *bhukti* and the *vīthi*. But the new *bhukti* seems to have been split up directly into *vīthis*. Like many of the older territories of Bengal, Kaṅkagrāma had a northern and a southern sub-division. The southern part (*Dakshiṇa-vīthi*) embraced Uttara-Rāḍhā or at least that portion of it which was watered by the river Mor.

[1] Doubtless identical with "Buttor" of Fredericke (Hunter, III. 309).
[2] *EI.* XXI. 214.
[3] Cf. *Pañchapushpa*, 1339 (B.S.), Phālguna, p. 670 with *Hand-Gazetteer of India*, 56.

THE TRANS-MEGHNĀ TRACTS

The division of the Trans-Meghnā area into *maṇḍalas, vishayas,* and *khaṇḍas* is hinted at in inscriptions discovered in Tippera and Chittagong. The Gunaighar Grant of Vainyagupta of the year 188 (508 A.D.) refers to a district styled Uttara-*maṇḍala* which must have answered to a part of Tippera. The Harikela-*maṇḍala* finds mention in the Chittagong Plate of Kāntideva. The Samataṭa-*maṇḍala* including the Paraṇāyi-*vishaya* is mentioned in the Mehar copper-plate of Dāmodara. The Tippera Grant[1] of Lokanātha of the year x44 (possibly 7th or 8th century A.D.) refers to the Suvvuṅga-*vishaya* which included a forest sub-division (*aṭavi-khaṇḍa*). A place styled Veja-*khaṇḍa* figures in the Maynāmati copper-plate grant of Raṇavaṅkamalla Harikāladeva.

We may conclude this account with a reference to the chief cities of ancient Bengal.

CITIES OF ANCIENT BENGAL

As early as Pāṇini we find mention of a city called Gauḍapura. But it cannot be identified. An old Brāhmī inscription refers to the city of Puṇḍranagara which answers to the modern Mahāsthān-garh, an ancient shrine and fort seven miles north of Bogra on the river Karatoyā. Under the name of Puñavadhana it seems to be mentioned in a Sāñchi *Stūpa* inscription. The city was still flourishing in the days of Hiuen Tsang (seventh century A.D.), and Sandhyākara Nandī (twelfth century A.D.). It formed the head-quarters of a *bhukti* till the Muslim conquest.

The famous port of Tāmralipti may be older even than the capital city of the Puṇḍras. It is mentioned in the Great Epic. But the earliest dated reference to it is that contained in the *Geography* of Ptolemy (about the middle of the second century A.D.). The Greek geographer refers to the city as Tamalites and places it on the Ganges in a way which suggests connection with the country of the Mandalai. The town of Tamluk, to which it is taken to correspond, is on the right bank of the river Rupnārāyan about twelve miles from its junction with the Hooghly. As pointed out above, the courses of these rivers have shifted frequently, and it is possible that in early times the port of Tāmralipti may have been situated on the Sarasvatī or another branch of the Ganges. In the days of the Chinese pilgrims, Fa-Hien, Hiuen Tsang, and I-tsing, and of Daṇḍin, the author of the *Daśakumāra-charita,* it was the

[1] *EI.* xv. 303 ff; *HNI.* 195; Cf. also *infra* p. 88.

place for embarkation for Ceylon, Java and China (in the east), and the land of the Yavanas (in the west). The *Kathāsaritsāgara* preserves traditions about people embarking on ships at Tāmralipti and going to Kaṭāha, possibly in the Malay Peninsula. The decline of the famous port commenced probably after the Dudhpāni (Hazaribagh) Rock inscription of Udayamāna (about the eighth century A.D.). The *Abhidhāna-chintāmaṇi* mentions Dāmalipta, Tāmalipta, Tamālinī, Stambapura and Vishṇugṛiha as synonyms of Tāmralipti. The *Trikāṇḍaśesha* adds Velākūla and Tamālikā (Tamluk).

Along with Tamalites, Ptolemy mentions the royal city of Gange which is already known to the author of the *Periplus* (first century A.D.):

> "Through this place are brought malabathrum and Gangetic spikenard and pearls, and muslins of the finest sorts which are called Gangetic."

The "market-town," as it is called in the *Periplus*, stood on the banks of the Ganges. But its exact situation is not known. Nor do we know the site of Vaṅganagara referred to in the Ceylonese chronicles in connection with the story of Prince Vijaya. In the same story figures a city styled Siṁhapura which is placed in Lāla (probably Rāḍhā) and is taken to correspond with Singur in the Serampore sub-division of Hooghly.[1] There is, however, a theory which places the city in Kāthiāwār.[2]

The Susunia inscription of the fourth century A.D. refers to a place called Pushkaraṇa which has been identified with Pokharnā on the south bank of the Dāmodar in the Bankura district. To its famous ruler Chandravarman has been ascribed the foundation of Chandravarma-koṭa mentioned in a Faridpur Grant. This stronghold is said to be represented by the fort at Koṭālipāḍā in the district of Faridpur. From the days of Kumāragupta I (fifth century A.D.) emerges another notable place, Koṭīvarsha, to which reference has already been made above (see *supra* p. 25).

The Baigram inscription of 448 A.D. refers to the head-quarters of a district officer at Pañchanagarī. The identity of the place is uncertain. It may have been situated in the Dinajpur district.

Another important site in North Bengal, whose antiquity can be traced back to the fifth century A.D., is Pāhārpur in the Rajshahi district which was known as Somapura in the days of Dharmapāla and his successors. It was burnt by a Vaṅgāla army in the eleventh century A.D.

In the sixth century A.D. Vardhamāna (Burdwan) and Navyāvakāśikā (possibly in the Dacca district) as well as Puṇḍra-

[1] *JASB.* 1910, p. 604.

[2] *CHI.* I. 606.

vardhana appear to have been seats of provincial governors or divisional commissioners styled *Uparika.* The grant of Vainyagupta refers to a royal residence styled Krīpura and the naval port of Chūḍāmaṇi whose location is uncertain. Krīpura reminds one of Nṛipura of the Nālandā Plate of Samudragupta.

In the seventh century Karṇasuvarṇa (possibly in the Murshidabad district) ranked with Puṇḍravardhana, Tāmralipti and the unnamed capital of Samataṭa as one of the premier cities of Bengal. It was the royal seat of Śaśāṅka and of Jayanāga and was occupied for a time by Bhāskaravarman of Assam. Close to the city was a magnificent monastery styled Rattamattikā or Red Clay which is taken to answer to Rungamutty (Rāṅgāmāṭi) on the western branch of the Ganges, near Berhampore in the Murshidabad district.

The Ashrafpur Plates refer to Jayakarmānta-vāsaka as a seat of the Khaḍga kings who possibly ruled over Samataṭa. The place has been identified with Baḍkāmtā near Comilla.

Curiously enough the records of the earliest Pāla kings do not afford any clue as to the location of their metropolis. We have only reference to a few camps of victory mostly in the neighbouring province of Bihar.[1] In the time of Dharmapāla, who is referred to as *Vaṅgapati* in a Pratīhāra record, the ancestral capital may have been in Eastern Bengal. But from the time of Devapāla, who is styled Gauḍeśvara in the Bādāl Pillar inscriptions, Gauḍa seems to have been the metropolitan *vishaya.* The *Anargha-rāghava* of Murāri, who probably flourished in the latter part of the eighth century A.D., refers to Champā as the capital of Gauḍa. The connection of Champā with a "Pāla" king of Gauḍa has been inferred from the Jaynagar Image inscription attributed to "Palapāla," but the reading of the name and of his epithet "Lord of Gauḍa" is extremely doubtful. Champā in Gauḍa may have been identical with Champā-nagarī in the *sarkar* of Madāran mentioned in the *Ain-i-Akbari.* It may, however, also refer to the famous city of that name that stood near modern Bhāgalpur.

The Chittagong Plates of Kāntideva of Harikela-*maṇḍala* (assigned to the ninth century A.D.) mention a royal residence at Vardhamānapura. If this city stood in Harikela it must be distinguished from Burdwan in West Bengal.[2] Its precise location can not be determined in the absence of fuller evidence.

[1] Pāṭaliputra and Kapila in the records of Dharmapāla (*Pāla Ins.*, *infra* Ch. VI, App. I, Nos. 2, 3) and Mudgagiri in the records of Devapāla and Nārāyaṇapāla (Nos. 6, 14).

[2] This point has been further discussed in Ch. VI *infra.* § III.

Epigraphic records of the time of Gopāla II, Mahīpāla I, and Vigrahapāla III refer to royal encampments at Vaṭaparvatikā, Vilāsapura and possibly Haradhāma.[1] The last two *skandhāvāras* were situated on the Ganges, as the royal donors bathed in the sacred stream before issuing the grants, mentioned in the records, from those places. Haradhāma, the "abode of Hara" or Śiva, reminds one of the city of *Chandrārdhamauli*, that is Śiva, in the Suhma country, mentioned by Dhoyī in the *Pavanadūta*. But the identity in meaning of the names of the two places may be accidental.

Rāmapāla, the youngest son of Vigrahapāla III, gave his name to the city of Rāmāvatī mentioned in the Manahali record of Madanapāla and the *Rāmacharita* of Sandhyākara. There should be no hesitation in recognising in this city the Rāmauti of the *Ain-i-Akbari*. The Senas removed the royal seat to the neighbouring city which became famous in the early Muslim period as Lakhnauti (Lakshmaṇāvatī) or Gaur (Gauḍa).[2] This famous capital stood on the banks of the Ganges close to its junction with the Mahānandā about twenty-five miles below Rājmahal. The Ganges has now changed its course and the ruins of the famous metropolis of mediaeval Bengal, which stretched no less than fifteen miles along its old bank, no longer touch the sacred stream at any point. Though it had to reckon with a rival in Pandua, Gaur retained its importance till the days of Humāyūn and Akbar. The great Mughals styled it Jannatabad. Owing to its unhealthy climate the city is said to have been abandoned, at least temporarily, after 1576 A.D. The capital was removed to Tanda and finally to Rājmahal.[3]

Among the less known dynasties that ruled contemporaneously with the Pālas in the tenth and eleventh centuries A.D., the Kāmbojas of Daṇḍabhukti had their capital at Priyaṅgu. The identity of the place is not known. The Chandra and Varman families issue grants from the camp of victory at Vikramapura and are associated with the cities of Rohitāgiri, Paṭṭikerā, Mehārakula (or Mṛikula) and Siṁhapura. The identification of these cities has been discussed in chapters dealing with their political history.[4]

The official capital (*rājadhānī*) of the Sena kings was, according to the testimony of Dhoyī, at Vijayapura. This city stood on the banks of the Ganges in or near the world-sanctifying country

[1] *Pāla Ins., op. cit.*, Nos. 23, 31, 39.

[2] Rennell, *Memoir of a Map of Hindoostan*, 55; Hunter, VII. 23, 51 ff; Khan Sahib M. Abid Ali Khan, *Memoirs of Gaur and Pandua.*

[3] Dr. B. Hamilton expressed the view that "the city went to ruin not from any great or uncommon calamity; but merely from the removal of the seat of Government" (by Suja). Hunter, VII. 53.

[4] See *infra* Chs. VII and IX.

(*deśam jagati pāvanam*) where the Jumna (*Tapana-tanayā*) starts off from the Bhāgīrathī. This undoubtedly points to the region of Triveṇī in the northern part of the Hooghly district. The manuscript of the *Pavanadūta* of Dhoyī styles this territory Brahma which one editor emends to Suhma. Mr. P. C. Sen,[1] however, believes in the existence of a Brahma country and finds his theory supported by the *Kāvya-mīmāṁsā* which mentions Brahmottara[2] along with Suhma. The theory seems plausible enough. But it cannot be said to be definitely established until fuller evidence, epigraphic or literary, is forthcoming.

Triveṇī is styled Muktaveṇī ('with the braids separated') to distinguish it from Prayāga or Allahabad which is known as Yuktaveṇī ('joint-braided'). The place is so-called from the fact, noted above, that the Bhāgīrathī, the Sarasvatī and the Jumnā branch out at this point. Triveṇī retained its fame in the early Muslim period and is still one of the most sacred spots in Bengal. Within two miles from it stood Saptagrāma, the mediaeval capital of South-western Bengal. The famous city is now represented by Sātgāon, a small village on the left bank of the Sarasvatī about four miles north of Hooghly.

The narrative of Dhoyī makes it likely that Vijayapura did not lie so far north of Triveṇī as Nadiyā which was the seat of 'Rae Lakhmanīah' at the time of the Khilji raid. It cannot be identified with Vijayanagara in Rajshahi. The wind-messenger of Dhoyī is not represented as crossing the Ganges at any point, or moving forward to another *deśa* far away from the sacred region where the Jumna comes out of the Ganges. It is, however, probable that the Senas, from the time of Lakshmaṇasena, had a secondary capital at Lakshmaṇāvatī near the Pāla city of Rāmāvatī. A third centre of Sena power was Vikramapura in the Dacca district of Eastern Bengal. The importance of this city dates back to the days of the Chandras and the Varmans. It continued to flourish till the time of Arirāja Danujamādhava, the illustrious Daśarathadeva, of the Deva family. The latter seems to have transferred his capital before 1280 A.D. to Suvarṇagrāma,[3] modern Sonārgāon in the eastern part of the Dacca district between the Lakhmiyā and Meghnā rivers. At about the same period Sātgāon replaced Vijayapura as the metropolis of South-western Bengal. Chāṭigrāma, the headquarters station of the Chittagong district and Division, does not appear to be mentioned in classical Sanskrit literature or inscrip-

[1] *IHQ*. 1932, pp. 524 ff. [2] Cf. Barmhattar in *Ain*. II. 141.

[3] It may be that Sonārgāon itself was regarded as a part of the Vikramapura-*bhāga* in those days. See also *infra* Ch. IX. § I.

tions of an early date. But if Tibetan tradition is to be believed, it was the birthplace of the Buddhist Tāntrik sage Tila-yogī who flourished in the tenth century A.D. The city was famous for its large Buddhist monastery styled Paṇḍita-vihāra where Buddhist scholars used to hold learned disputations with adherents of rival sects.[1]

[1] For further reference to Chittagong in Tibetan chronicles, cf. *IHQ*. XVI. 228; *JASB*. 1898, p. 23.

CHAPTER II

THE LEGENDARY PERIOD

"THE vision of the historian," says Vincent Smith, "can not pass the line which separates the dated from the undated." In the case of Bengal, dated history begins only from 326 B.C., with the famous stand made by the warriors of the Gangaridai and the Prasioi to resist the threatening onslaught of Alexander who had advanced to the Hyphasis and was eager to penetrate deeper into the interior of India.

There was probably some kind of organised social and political life in Bengal many centuries before that notable event, but we do not possess any detailed information about it. The little that we know of the earliest period is derived almost solely from a study of the Vedic literature. We cannot but attach due significance to the absence of all references to Bengal in the *Ṛik-saṁhitā* and in later Saṁhitās and Brāhmaṇas, barring a few casual notices in the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa,* and possibly the *Aitareya Āraṇyaka,* all of which reveal an attitude towards the country and its people which is not one of approbation (See *supra* pp. 7-8).

We may, therefore, legitimately draw the inference that the primitive peoples of Bengal were different in race or culture, and perhaps in both, from the Aryans who compiled the Vedic literature. We may further hold that Bengal was unknown or but little known to the Vedic Aryans during the period represented by the *Ṛik-saṁhitā,* but that at the time of the later Saṁhitās and Brāhmaṇas they were gradually coming into contact with the province and adjoining tracts, though this region was still outside the pale of Vedic civilisation. These inferences are fully supported by the famous story of Māthava the Videgha in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa.*

An interesting sidelight is thrown on the orthodox Aryan view of the origin and characteristics of the early people of Bengal by the Śunaḥśepa episode of the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa.*[1] The Ṛishi Viśvāmitra adopted as his son a Brāhmaṇa boy who had been offered as a victim in a sacrifice to appease a deity. Fifty elder sons of the sage expressed disapproval of the act and were consequently cursed by their father. "Your offspring," said the offended parent, "shall inherit the ends of the earth."[2] They came to be

[1] VII. 13-18.

[2] M. Haug translates the passage as follows: "You shall have the lowest castes for your descendants."

known as the Andhras, Puṇḍras, Śabaras, Pulindas, and Mūtibas who lived in large numbers beyond the borders of Aryandom, and ranked as *dasyus* or outlandish barbarians. An echo of this legend is found in the thirteenth book of the *Mahābhārata*.

A different account of the origin of the Puṇḍras, and some cognate tribes including the Vaṅgas and the Suhmas, is given in the first book of the Great Epic[1]: A blind old sage drifted along the Ganges on a raft, and passed through many countries, till he was picked up by a king named Bali. The childless monarch implored him to raise up offspring on his wife. He did so, and in course of time the queen gave birth to five sons, Aṅga, Vaṅga, Kaliṅga, Puṇḍra, and Suhma. They gave their names to five countries, which together roughly correspond to the modern provinces of Bengal and Orissa, with the district of Bhagalpur in Bihar.

In spite of stories about the infusion of the blood of *Ṛishis* from upper India, it is evident that even in later Brahmanical literature the primitive tribes of Bengal were regarded as *dasyus* and transgressors by the sages. The *Mahābhārata* peoples the Bengal sea-coast with *Mlechchhas*, the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (II. 4. 18) classes the Suhmas as a sinful (*pāpa*) tribe along with the Kirātas, Hūnas, Andhras, Pulindas, Pukkasas, Ābhīras, Yavanas, and Khasas, while the *Dharmasūtra* of Bodhāyana prescribes expiatory rites after a sojourn amongst the Puṇḍras and the Vaṅgas.

The wild character of the people of Bengal is also emphasised by early Jaina tradition. It is stated in the *Āchārāṅga-sūtra*[2] that when Mahāvīra travelled in the "pathless country" of the Lāḍhas, in "Vajjabhūmi" and "Subbhabhūmi," many natives attacked him, and dogs ran at him. Few people kept off the attacking beasts. Striking the monk they cried "*chu chchhu*," and made the dogs bite him. Many other mendicants had to eat rough food in Vajjabhūmi. They carried about a strong pole or a stalk to keep off the dogs. The Jaina writer laments that it was difficult to travel in Lāḍha (Rāḍhā) *i.e.* in Western Bengal.

The literary evidence bearing upon the non-Aryan character of the original people of Bengal is supported by linguistic considerations. From an examination of certain tribal names constituting almost identical pairs or triads, differentiated between themselves only by the nature of their initial consonants, Sylvain Lévi[3] draws the conclusion that the primitive peoples of Bengal and some

[1] The account is also found in the Purāṇas; Cf. *Matsya*, Ch. 48. vv. 77 ff; *Vāyu*, Ch. 99. 11. 85 ff.

[2] I. 8. 3; *S.B.E.* XXII (Jaina-sūtras, Part I), p. 84.

[3] *Pre-Aryan and Pre-Dravidian in India* (trans. by P. C. Bagchi), pp. 124-125.

neighbouring provinces spoke a language that was neither Aryan nor Dravidian, but belonged to a separate family of speech. Other scholars[1] suspect a strong Polynesian influence on the pre-Dravidian population of the southern coast of India. Keith[2] considers much of the evidence adduced by Lévi as of dubious value. It is, however, interesting to note that a Bengal tribe (the Gauḍas) and a royal family (the Pālas) in historic ages were considered to have an oceanic connection.[3]

Whatever may have been the ethnic association of the primitive inhabitants of Bengal, it was not long before Aryan influence began to spread in their land. While early *Dharmasūtras* and grammatical treatises confine the land of the Aryans to the upper Ganges valley, the author of the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* extends it from the western to the eastern sea. It should, however, be noted that the law-giver brands the Pauṇḍras as *degraded* Kshatriyas, and classes them with Dravidians, Scythians, Chinese, and other outlandish peoples. The *Sabhāparvan* (52. 17) of the *Mahābhārata*, on the contrary, refers to the Vaṅgas and the Puṇḍras as well-born Kshatriyas. The testimony of the epic accords with that of the Jaina *Prajñāpanā* which includes the Vaṅgas and Lāḍhas in the list of Aryan peoples, while Dravidians rank as *milikkhas* or *mlechchhas* (barbarians).

By the time when the *Tīrtha-yātrā* section of the Great Epic was composed, the valley of the Karatoyā as well as the lower reaches of the Ganges, where the great river runs into the sea, became recognised as sacred spots. The sanctity of the lower Ganges is also implied in the famous story of king Bhagīratha.

About the political history of the ancient peoples of Bengal, Vedic literature gives no details save that it was peopled by a number of tribes as mentioned above. No Bengal king figures in the hymns or even in the Vedic texts on ritual and philosophy, as does Sudās, hero of the Tṛitsus, Janamejaya, sovereign of the Kurus, or Janaka, the philosopher-king of the Videhas.

[1] *E.g.* James Hornell, *MASB*. VII. No. 3, 1920, quoted in Lévi's work (*ibid.* 124).

[2] *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and the Upanishads*, II. 632 f.

[3] '*Samudrāśraya*,' an expression used in the Haraha inscription in reference to the Gauḍas, has been taken to mean "living on the sea-shore" (*EI*. XIV. 120) and taking "shelter towards the sea-shore" (*HNI*. 111). But *Samudra* may not refer to the sea-*shore*. The passage in question implies that the Gauḍas were considered to have had a place of refuge in the sea itself, perhaps in an island, and not merely in the *velā*, *anūpa* or *kachchha*. This is possible if they were themselves a maritime people, or at least had intimate connection with peoples beyond the seas. Communication between West Bengal and Malayasia was easy in the Gupta Age. Regarding the oceanic connection of the Pālas, cf. the commentary on Sandhyākara's *Rāmacharita*, I. 4.

The epics of the middle country and the chronicles of Ceylon furnish some detailed information regarding the legendary kings of old. The epic poets knew Bengal as a country that was usually split up into groups of petty states nine of which are specifically named. Their placid contentment was now and then rudely disturbed by the appearance of invaders from the upper provinces. The Rāma-epic records a tradition that the Vaṅgas acknowledged the supremacy of the ruler of Ayodhyā.[1] The people of the lower Ganges sometimes fought for their independence but occasionally "followed a cane-like course as against a river torrent." The Great Epic refers to victorious campaigns undertaken by Karṇa, Kṛishṇa, and Bhīmasena in these parts of India. Karṇa is said to have vanquished the Suhmas, the Puṇḍras, and the Vaṅgas, and constituted Vaṅga and Aṅga into one *vishaya* of which he was the *Adhyaksha* or ruler. Kṛishṇa defeated both the Vaṅgas and the Pauṇḍras. His wrath was specially directed towards the "false" Vāsudeva, lord of the Pauṇḍras, who is said to have united Vaṅga, Puṇḍra, and Kirāta into a powerful kingdom, and entered into an alliance with Jarāsandha of Magadha. Before he met his doom at the hands of Kṛishṇa, Pauṇḍraka-Vāsudeva had to suffer humiliation at the hands of the Pāṇḍu princes. Bhīmasena, in the course of his eastern campaign, subdued all the local princes of Bengal including Samudrasena, his son Chandrasena, and the great lord of the Puṇḍras himself. In many respects Pauṇḍraka-Vāsudeva was a remarkable figure, and may be looked upon as the epic precursor of the Gauḍa conquerors of the seventh and eighth centuries. In the end both the Vaṅgas and the Pauṇḍras had to bring tribute to the court of Yudhishṭhira.

While suffering much at the hands of conquerors from upper India, the Bengal kings availed themselves of opportunities to wreak vengeance on their tormentors. They took part in the internecine strife of the Kurus and the Pāṇḍus, and appear in the battle books of the *Mahābhārata* as allies of Duryodhana. The *Bhīshma-parvan* gives a thrilling account of a lively encounter between a scion of the Pāṇḍus and the "mighty ruler of the Vaṅgas":

> "Beholding that lance levelled at Duryodhana, the lord of the Vaṅgas quickly arrived on the scene with his elephant that towered like a mountain. He covered the Kuru king's chariot with the body of the animal. Ghaṭotkacha, with eyes reddened with rage, flung his upraised missile at the beast. Struck with the dart the elephant bled profusely and fell down dead. The rider quickly jumped down from the falling animal"

and Duryodhana rushed to his rescue.

[1] II. 10. 37.

While some of the Bengal kings fought on elephants, others rode on "ocean-bred steeds of the hue of the moon." Their *dhvajas* or standards are also referred to in the epic.

While epic stories recall the military prowess of Bengal rulers "of fierce energy," the Pāli chronicles of Ceylon preserve memories of another field of their activities. A prince named Sīhabāhu, who inherited the kingdom of Vaṅga from a maternal ancestor, renounced his claims in favour of a relation, and built a new city in the kingdom of Lāla which came to be known as Sīhapura. The new metropolis has been identified by some with Sihor in Kāthiāwār, and the territory in which it lay, with Lāṭa. But Kāthiāwār was known in ancient times as Surāshṭra, and not as Lāṭa. The close association with Vaṅga suggests that Lāla of the Pāli chronicles is Lāḍha of the Jaina *Sūtras* and Rāḍhā of Sanskrit records. There is a place in Rāḍhā known as Singur which is taken by some to represent the Siṁhapura of the Island Chronicles.[1]

The eldest son of Sīhabāhu was Vijaya. The prince incurred the displeasure of his father and his people by his evil ways, and had to go into exile. With his followers he sailed in a ship to Sopara, north of Bombay. But the violence of his attendants alienated the people of the locality. The prince had to embark again, and eventually "landed in Laṅkā, in the region called Tambapanni." The date assigned by the Ceylonese tradition to the arrival of Vijaya and his "lion-men" (Sīhalas) in the island is the year of the *Parinirvāṇa* according to the reckoning of Ceylon (544 B.C.). But it is difficult to say how far this date can be relied upon[2] or what amount of historical truth is contained in the story. It may be based upon some genuine tradition relating to the early political relations between Bengal and Ceylon, or may be simply an echo of the later colonial enterprises emanating from Bengal to the over-sea territories towards the south and the south-east.

The few scattered notices of Bengal collected above are but poor substitutes of history. But they enable us to form some general conclusions: First, that the early settlers in Bengal and Orissa

[1] *JASB.* 1910, p. 604; for other views see *CHI.* I. xxv; see also *IHQ.* II (1926), p. 6; IX (1933), pp. 724 ff. Singur is a notable place in the Hooghly district (Hunter, III. 307).

[2] In the time of the *Periplus* (60-80 A.D.) the island was still known as Taprobane (Tambapanni or Tāmraparṇī), and Palaesimundu. It is only in the *Geography* of Ptolemy that we come across the new name Salike along with the older designations (Taprobane and Simoundou). The inhabitants of Salike were known to Ptolemy as *Salai*, doubtless the *Sīhalas* of Ceylonese tradition. The name Sīhala is also met with in the Nāgārjunikoṇḍa inscriptions of about the third century A.D.

were closely allied tribes of non-Aryan origin, but a gradual process of Aryan infiltration began in the first millennium B.C. Secondly, that there were settled governments in Bengal long before the commencement of the historic period. Thirdly, that the country was normally divided into a number of states some of which occasionally grew very powerful. Lastly, that the kingdoms of Bengal had intimate relations with her immediate neighbours on the west.

CHAPTER III

EARLY HISTORY FROM 326 B.C. TO 320 A.D.

THE veil of darkness that enshrouds the early history of Bengal is partially lifted in the latter half of the fourth century B.C. A considerable portion of the country now constitutes the domain of a powerful nation, whose sway extended over the whole of ancient Vaṅga, and possibly some adjoining tracts. Greek and Latin writers refer to the people as the Gangaridai (*variant* Gandaridai). The Sanskrit equivalent of the term is difficult to determine. Classical scholars take the word to mean "the people of the Ganges region." Curtius, Plutarch, and Solinus[1] agree in placing them on the *further*, that is the eastern, bank of the Ganges. Diodorus, too, in one passage locates "the dominions of the nation of the Praisioi and the Gandaridai," whose king had 4,000 elephants trained and equipped for war, *beyond* the Ganges.[2] This accords with the statements of Curtius and Plutarch. There is, however, another passage of Diodorus[3] where it is stated that

> "This river (Ganges), which is 30 stades in width, flows from north to south and empties into the ocean, forming the boundary *towards the east* of the tribe of the Gandaridae who possesses the largest number of elephants . . . 4,000 elephants equipped for war."

This has been taken by some writers to imply that the territory of the Gandaridae (Gangaridai) lay to the *west* of the Ganges, understanding by the term the Bhāgīrathī or the Hooghly. But Diodorus himself does not make it clear in this passage as to whether he means by the Ganges the westernmost branch or the easternmost one. A third passage of the same writer[4] seems to suggest that the easternmost branch that separates our country from Further India, that is Indo-China, is meant. The passage is quoted below:

> "India . . . is inhabited by very many nations among which the greatest of all is that of the Gandaridai, against whom Alexander did not undertake an expedition, being deterred by the multitude of their elephants. This region is separated from Further India by the greatest river in those parts, for it has a breadth of 30 stadia, but it adjoins the rest of India which Alexander had conquered."

The river mentioned in this passage as having "a breadth of 30 stadia" and forming the boundary between Further India and

[1] M'Crindle, *Invasion of India by Alexander the Great*, 221, 310; *Megasthenes and Arrian* (1926), p. 160.

[2] XVII. 93. [3] II. 37. [4] XVIII. 6.

the Gangaridai is doubtless the Ganges. In the light of this evidence it is more reasonable to identify the stream which, according to a passage quoted earlier, forms the boundary towards the east of the tribe of the Gandaridae, with the easternmost branch of the Ganges rather than with the westernmost mouth of the river.

Incidentally the passages quoted from Diodorus seem to imply that the famous Sicilian writer uses the term Gandaridai (Gangaridai) in *two* different senses. In its restricted sense he confines it to the easternmost part of India, while in its wider sense he means by it the whole country between the part of "India which Alexander had conquered" and Further India. It is the restricted sense of the term which alone is known to the natural historians and geographers of classical antiquity. Pliny tells us[1] that the final part of the course of the Ganges is through the country of the Gangarides. Ptolemy says[2] that "all the country about the mouths of the Ganges is occupied by the Gangaridai." He mentions Tamalites separately in a way that implies connection with the territory of the Mandalai and Palibothra (Pāṭaliputra) rather than with the Gangaridai. The truth seems to be that while Greek and Latin historians and geographers in general restricted the dominion of the Gangaridai to the territory about the mouths of the Ganges (*Gaṅgāsroto'ntara* of the *Raghuvaṁśa* of Kālidāsa), and one great authority seems to distinguish it from Tamalites (Tāmralipti), Diodorus sometimes uses the term in an extended sense to mean the entire territory between the Hyphasis (Beas) and the borders of Further India or the Trans-Gangetic peninsula. This peculiar use of the term by the Sicilian writer explains why in certain passages the king of the Prasioi[3] and the Gandaridai is sometimes referred to simply as the king of the Gandaridai.[4] The reference to the possession of 4,000 elephants by the king of the Prasioi and the Gandaridai in Book XVII, and by the Gangaridae in Book II, Ch. 37, suggests that the Gangaridae of Book II are not the Gangaridae proper of the lower Ganges valley, but the united nation of the Prasioi and the Gandaridai of Book XVII. The extended meaning given to the name Gandaridai (Gangaridai) by Diodorus may have been due in part to the presence in upper India of a city called Gange[5] whose existence is vouched for by Artemidoros and Strabo. This city must be carefully distinguished from Gange, the royal

[1] *Megasthenes and Arrian*, 137; Monahan, *EHB*. 5.

[2] New edition, p. 172.

[3] The name appears in various slightly differing forms in classical writings (cf. *CHI*. I. 468, f.n. 5). The form 'Prasioi' is adopted in this chapter.

[4] *E.g.* XVII. 93.

[5] *Ancient India as described in Classical Literature*, 77.

residence of the Gangaridai, mentioned by Ptolemy and apparently by the author of the *Periplus*.

It is not easy to determine the precise boundary line between the Gangaridai proper and the people styled the Prasioi who had their capital at Pāṭaliputra. The evidence of Ptolemy suggests that in his days, or in those of the writers on whom he relies, the kingdom, of which Pāṭaliputra was the royal residence, apparently extended as far as the Ganges and may have included Tāmralipti. The Gangaridai lay beyond this territory. The exact political relationship between the Prasioi and the Gangaridai in the days of Alexander is not free from a certain amount of ambiguity. This is due in part to the somewhat equivocal language used by the classical historians or their translators. Curtius refers to the Gangaridae and the Prasioi as two nations under one king, Agrammes, but immediately afterwards makes Poros testify to the "strength of *the nation* and kingdom" which words imply a united realm and not a dual monarchy. Diodorus, too, speaks of the *nation* of the Prasioi and the Gandaridai whose king was Xandrames. The people over whom this prince ruled is farther on represented *simply as the Gandaridai*, a use of the term whose significance has been sought to be explained above. Plutarch refers to "the kings of the Gandaridai and the Prasioi" implying the existence of a plurality of such rulers. They were reported to be waiting for Alexander with an army of 80,000 horse, 200,000 foot, 8,000 war chariots, and 6,000 fighting elephants. As the king mentioned by Curtius and Diodorus had only 20,000 horse, 200,000 infantry, 2,000 four-horsed chariots and 3,000 or 4,000 elephants, the additional forces mentioned by Plutarch may, in the opinion of some, point to an extra contingent furnished by a second prince who may be identified with the king of the Gangaridae proper if the first ruler was the monarch of the Prasioi. It is, however, worthy of notice that the number of foot soldiers remains constant in the three accounts. As regards the number of elephants, the discrepancy between the accounts of Curtius and Diodorus suggests divergence of tradition rather than reinforcement by an additional contingent. The bloated number of chariots and horses in the pages of Plutarch is capable of a similar explanation. It is significant that a few lines farther on Plutarch, too, like Curtius and Diodorus, speaks of the "whole country" beyond the Ganges which "Alexander could easily have taken possession of" as the domain of "*the king*" who "was hated and despised by his subjects for the wickedness of his disposition and the meanness of his origin"—characteristics which cannot fail to recall the famous description of Agrammes by Curtius and of Xandrames by Diodorus. The epithet, "son of a barber," and

sovereignty over the Prasioi undoubtedly point to the identification of the ruler in question with a king of the Nanda line, the *nāpita-kumāra* of the *Pariśishṭa-parvan* of Hemachandra, or his son.

It may reasonably be inferred from the statements of the Greek and Latin writers that about the time of Alexander's invasion, the Gangaridai were a very powerful nation, and either formed a dual monarchy with the Prasioi, or were otherwise closely associated with them on equal terms in a common cause against the foreign invader.

When Alexander reached the Beas and was eager to cross over to the Ganges valley, the information reached his ears that the king or kings of the Gangaridai and the Prasioi were awaiting his attack with a powerful army. The shock of battle was narrowly missed. The war-worn veterans of the Macedonian king persuaded their leader to trace back his steps to the Hydaspes and ultimately to Babylon.

After the withdrawal of Alexander, the Greek menace was evanascent for several generations. Chandragupta welded the major part of India into one empire. The evidence of Greek as well as Buddhist writers seems to suggest that the authority of the great Mauryas was acknowledged in deltaic as well as in northern Bengal.

The Brāhmī record at Mahāsthān, which is usually assigned to the Maurya period, refers to Puṇḍranagara as a prosperous city. It undoubtedly enjoyed the blessings of good government. Its store-house was filled with coins styled *gaṇḍakas* and *kākanikas* which were at the service of the people in times of emergency due to water, fire, and pests. The reference to coins in this old inscription is of peculiar interest. As is well known, numerous punch-marked coins have been discovered in various parts of Bengal.[1]

The discovery of terracotta figurines of the Śuṅga period at Mahāsthāngarh proves that the city of Puṇḍravardhana continued to flourish even after the fall of the imperial Mauryas. The site of Silua in the Noakhali district has yielded fragments of a colossal image the pedestal of which bore an inscription assigned by archaeologists to the second century B.C.[2] The accounts of the *Periplus* and Ptolemy seem to indicate that in the first two centuries of the Christian era the whole of deltaic Bengal was organised into a powerful kingdom with its capital at Gange, a great market-town on the banks of the Ganges. This city of Gange is placed by Ptolemy considerably to the south-east of "T(h)amalites"

[1] Cf. Ch. XVI *infra*.

[2] *ASI*. 1930-34, Part I. 38-39.

or Tāmralipti (about whose exact position his information does not seem to be accurate), below the junction of the branches of the Ganges leading to the Mega (possibly the Hooghly) and Kamberikhon mouths respectively. The capital, which thus probably lay in Central Bengal, produced muslin of the finest sort which was much prized by the peoples of the west. There were gold mines in the vicinity. The *Periplus* refers to a gold coin which is called *Caltis*.

The reference to gold mines is interesting. One cannot fail to be reminded of the "Gold District" (Suvarṇa-vīthi) of a Faridpur Grant, and also of the "Gold Village" (Suvarṇa-grāma) which replaced older Vikramapura as the capital of Vaṅga in the latter half of the thirteenth century A.D. As to the gold coin it is to be noted that a coin made of the precious metal has been unearthed at Mahāsthāngarh representing the standing bearded figure of Kanishka on the obverse and Nannaia on the reverse.[1] It is, however, difficult to say whether the coin mentioned in the *Periplus* was issued by the imperial government of the Kushānas, or some local administration in the Gangetic delta.

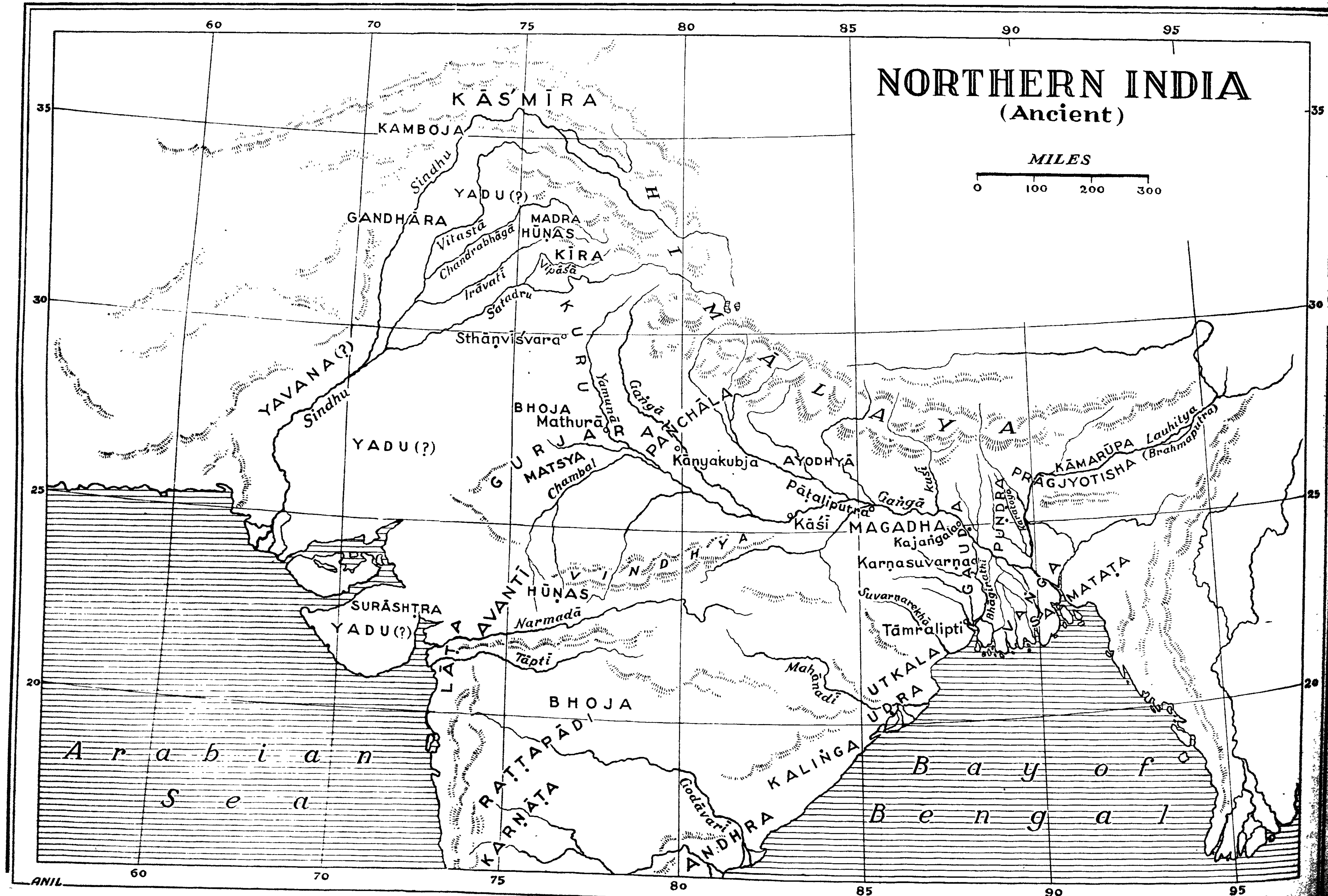
'Kushāna' coins have been discovered in several places in Bihar, Bengal, and Orissa. It is a debatable question whether these finds indicate any suzerainty of the Kushāna kings over these territories. Coins, as we know, travel by way of trade far beyond the limits of the kingdom where they are issued. In the absence of any corroborative evidence, therefore, it is not easy to say whether Bengal or any part of it ever formed a province of the Kushāna empire.

The next glimpse of the political condition of Bengal is afforded by the inscriptions of the age of Samudragupta. They disclose the existence of new kingdoms in place of the traditional realms mentioned in the epics and the early literature of the Jainas and the Buddhists. In Eastern Bengal rose the kingdom of Samataṭa. In Western Bengal we have the kingdom of Pushkaraṇa with its capital probably at Pokharnā in the Bankura district. It was ruled by Siṁhavarman towards the close of the third or beginning of the fourth century A.D. and then by his son Chandravarman. Chandravarman seems to have been a mighty warrior who extended his dominions eastwards as far as the Faridpur district. For the protection of the newly acquired territory he founded a fortress styled Chandravarma-koṭa.

It would appear that the general political condition of Bengal at the beginning of the fourth century A.D. was not probably very

[1] *ASI.* 1930-34, Part II. 256. It is probably an imitation of the issues of Kanishka which were in circulation in a later age in Eastern India.

different from that depicted in the epics. A number of sturdy states, sheltered by the great barriers of rivers and swamps, constituted its most prominent characteristic. Events, to be described later on, also show that, in this age, as in earlier times, they could occasionally form closer political associations and join hands to fight a common external aggressor.


NORTHERN INDIA
(Ancient)
MILES
0 100 200 300
KĀŚMĪRA
KAMBOJA
Sindhu
YADU(?)
GANDHĀRA
MADRA
HŪṆAS
KĪRA
Vitastā
Chandrabhāgā
Vipāśā
Irāvatī
Śatadru
KURU
HIMĀLAYA
Sthāṇviśvara
YAVANA(?)
Sindhu
YADU(?)
Yamunā
Gaṅgā
BHOJA
Mathurā
PAÑCHĀLA
GURJARA
MATSYA
Chambal
Kānyakubja
AYODHYĀ
Pāṭaliputra
Kāśī
MAGADHA
Gaṅgā
Kuśī
KĀMARŪPA
PRĀGJYOTISHA
Lauhitya
(Brahmaputra)
PUṆḌRA
Karatoyā
GAUḌA
Kajaṅgala
Karṇasuvarṇa
VINDHYA
AVANTĪ
HŪṆAS
SURĀSHTRA
YADU(?)
Narmadā
LĀṬA
Tāptī
Suvarṇarekhā
Bhāgīrathī
VAṄGA
SAMATAṬA
Tāmralipti
Mahānadī
UTKALA
UḌRA
BHOJA
RAṬṬAPĀḌI
KALIṄGA
Arabian Sea
Bay of Bengal
RAṬṬA
KARṆĀṬA
Godāvarī
ĀNDHRA
60 70 75 80 85 90 95
35 30 25 20
ANIL

[To face p. 57]

CHAPTER IV

RISE OF GAUḌA AND VANGA (320-650 A.D.)

I. Bengal under the Imperial Guptas

The establishment of the Gupta empire marks the end of the independent existence of the various states that flourished in Bengal at the beginning of the fourth century A.D. With the exception of Samataṭa, the rest of Bengal was definitely incorporated in the Gupta empire by the time of Samudragupta. The ruler of Samataṭa, to quote the conventional and characteristic court-language of the Guptas, 'gratified the emperor Samudragupta by payment of all kinds of tribute, by obedience to his commands and by approach for paying court to him.'[1] In other words, Samataṭa was a tributary state, acknowledging the suzerainty of the Gupta Emperor, but with full autonomy in respect of internal administration. The exact limits of Samataṭa cannot be ascertained, but it may be taken as roughly equivalent to Eastern Bengal.[2]

Whether the subjugation of Bengal took place during the reign of Samudragupta, or was accomplished wholly or even partly by his father,[3] is difficult to decide. An inscription engraved on an iron pillar at Meherauli, near the Qutb Minār at Delhi, mentions, among other military exploits of a king called Chandra, that he 'extirpated in battle in the Vaṅga countries his enemies who offered him a united resistance.'[4] In the absence of full details about this king Chandra, his identity is a matter of great uncertainty and has formed a subject of keen controversy among scholars. He has been identified, for example, both with Chandragupta I[5] and Chandragupta II.[6] In the former case we must hold that the father of Samudragupta had already added Vaṅga[7] to the Gupta empire. In

[1] Allahabad Pillar Ins. l. 29. *CII.* III. 8, 14.

[2] For boundaries of Samataṭa, see *supra* p. 17 and *infra* p. 85, f.n. 4.

[3] The question whether the Guptas ruled in Bengal before Chandragupta has been discussed *infra* pp. 69-70.

[4] *CII.* III. 141.

[5] Fleet (*CII.* III. 140, f.n. 1); Dr. R. G. Basak (*HNI.* 14ff); Dr. S. K. Aiyangar (*JIH.* VI. *University Supplement*, 14-22).

[6] Hoernle (*IA.* XXI. 43). Formerly V. A. Smith also held this view (*JRAS.* 1897, p. 1; *EHI.* 3rd ed., p. 290, f.n. 1).

[7] Vaṅga countries (*Vaṅgeshu*) may mean *Vaṅga* (Eastern and Southern Bengal) and other parts of Bengal, or different principalities in Vaṅga.

the latter case, it must be presumed that Vaṅga had shaken off the yoke of the Gupta empire, and the son of Samudragupta had to reconquer the province by defeating the combination of the peoples or different states of Bengal.

There is, however, no definite evidence that Chandra of the Meherauli inscription is either Chandragupta I or Chandragupta II, and he may be altogether a different person whose identity yet remains to be established.[1]

In spite of the uncertainty of the data furnished by the Meherauli Iron Pillar inscription, it shows that although Bengal was divided into a number of independent states they did combine and offer a vigorous resistance against a foreign invader named Chandra. The latter was either one of the two Gupta Emperors named Chandragupta, or an earlier ruler whose aggressive policy helped the Guptas by weakening the resources of Bengal and its power of resistance. The latter hypothesis appears more probable, and it is not unlikely that the original kingdom of the Guptas included a portion of Bengal which provided them a basis for further conquests (see *infra* pp. 69-70).

Evidence is not altogether lacking that Samudragupta himself carried his victorious arms into Bengal. For among the kings of Āryāvarta, who were, according to the Allahabad *Praśasti,* uprooted by Samudragupta, we find the name of Chandravarman who may be reasonably identified with the king of that name mentioned in the Susunia inscription as ruler of Pushkaraṇa.[2] This Pushkaraṇa has been plausibly identified with the village named Pokharnā, 25 miles north-east of Susunia on the south bank of the river Dāmodar, which has yielded considerable antiquities reaching back to the Gupta period, if not earlier.[3] Chandravarman may thus be regarded as the king of Rāḍhā or the region immediately to its south,

[1] MM. Haraprasād Śāstrī identifies this king with king Chandravarman, one of the nine kings of Āryāvarta defeated by Samudragupta as mentioned in his Allahabad Pillar inscription. He holds that this Chandravarman is the same king who is referred to in the Susunia Rock inscription as son of Siṁhavarman, ruler of Pushkaraṇa, and believes further, on the strength of an inscription found at Mandasor, that Pushkaraṇa, where this family of kings ruled, is to be located at Pokharan in the Jodhpur State. MM. Śāstrī's view has been accepted by V. A. Smith and R. D. Banerji: MM. H. P. Śāstrī (*EI.* XII. 315 ff.; XIII. 133; *IA.* 1913, pp. 217 ff); V. A. Smith (*EHI.* 4th ed., p. 307, f.n. 1); R. D. Banerji (*EI.* XIV. 367 ff).

Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri holds that Chandra may be one of the "two kings named Sadā-Chandra and Chandrāṁśa mentioned among the post-Andhran kings of Nāga lineage" in the Purāṇas (*PHAI.* 4th ed., p. 449). None of these proposals, however, is supported by convincing arguments.

[2] *IHQ.* I. 254-55; *PHAI.* 4th ed., p. 448.

[3] *ASI.* 1927-28, pp. 188-89.

by defeating whom Samudragupta paved the way for the conquest of Bengal.

Whatever view we might take of the actual process of the conquest of Bengal, the epigraphic records leave no doubt that in the days of Kumāragupta I Northern Bengal formed an important administrative division of the Gupta empire under the name of Puṇḍravardhana-*bhukti*.[1] It was placed in charge of a Governor appointed by the Emperor himself. The Governor, in his turn, appointed officers to take charge of the various districts into which the province was divided. It is to be noted, however, that occasionally even the district officer seems to have been appointed directly by the Gupta Emperor.

The Dāmodarpur copper-plates of Budhagupta[2] indicate that Northern Bengal formed an integral part of the great Gupta empire down to the end of the fifth century A.D. Another inscription from Dāmodarpur, dated in the year 544 A.D.,[3] refers to a suzerain ruler, whose name ended in *-gupta,* but whose proper name is lost. In that year the son of the Emperor was acting as his Governor in Puṇḍravardhana-*bhukti*. It appears very probable that the overlord in question belonged to the dynasty of the Later Guptas[4] who claimed suzerainty over Northern Bengal down to the end of the sixth century A.D.

Although Samataṭa was a semi-independent feudatory state in the time of Samudragupta, it seems to have been gradually incorporated into the Gupta empire, for in the year 507-8 A.D. Mahārāja Vainyagupta was the ruler of this region, and granted lands in the Tippera district.[5] He issued gold coins and assumed the title Dvādaśāditya.[6] Although he is titled Mahārāja in his own record, he is given the title Mahārājādhirāja in a seal discovered

[1] Dhanaidaha CP. Year 113 (432-33 A.D.), *EI.* XVII. 345; Baigram CP. Year 128 (447-48 A.D.), *EI.* XXI. 78; Damodarpur CP. Nos. 1 and 2, Years 124, 128 (*EI.* XV. 129ff; XVII. 193).

[2] Nos. 3 and 4 (*EI.* XV. 134 ff); cf. also Paharpur CP. dated 159 G.E. (*EI.* XX. 61; *SPP.* XXXIX. 143).

[3] No. 5. *EI.* XV. 141 ff. Date corrected in *EI.* XVII. 193.

[4] It has been suggested that the overlord in question was Vishṇugupta, a large number of whose coins have been found with the legend 'Chandrāditya' on the reverse (*EHBP.* 13-14).

[5] Gunaighar CP. *IHQ.* VI. (1930), pp. 40 ff. It records a grant of land from the victorious camp of Krīpura by Mahārāja Vainyagupta, who meditates on the feet of Mahādeva, at the request of Mahārāja Rudradatta, a slave to his feet in the Year 188 current (507-8 A.D.). The land granted must have been in the neighbourhood of Gunaighar (Guṇikāgrahāra of the ins.) where the plate was found, about eighteen miles to the north-west of Comilla.

[6] Cf. *IHQ.* IX. 784 ff.

at Nālandā.[1] The exact status of Vainyagupta is difficult to determine. The most reasonable view seems to be that he was a member of the Imperial Gupta family and acted at first as a *de facto* independent ruler whose dominions included Eastern Bengal. Subsequently, taking advantage of the decline of the Imperial Guptas, and also perhaps of the internal disunion and discord, he declared himself openly as the Emperor.[2] In any case, his career proves the direct Gupta rule over Samataṭa at the beginning of the sixth century A.D. Krīpura, the place from which he issued his land-grant in 507-8 A.D., was evidently the seat of his government. It has not yet been identified, but is possibly to be looked for in Bengal.

Of Suhma or Rāḍhā, the remaining part of Bengal, we have no detailed information for the period during which it was subject to the Gupta rule.[3]

II. INDEPENDENT KINGDOMS IN BENGAL

The different stages in the decline and downfall of the Gupta empire have not yet been fixed with any degree of certainty. There is, however, no doubt, that it showed visible signs of decline towards the beginning of the sixth century A.D.

Apart from what we know of the general political condition in Northern India, this may also be inferred from the assumption of higher rank by the Governor of Puṇḍravardhana (North Bengal)[4] and the fact that Vainyagupta was ruling as practically an independent king in Eastern Bengal. Within half a century the death-blow was dealt to the mighty Gupta empire by the sweeping victories of Yaśodharman. In his Mandasor inscription this great military adventurer, who suddenly leapt to fame and power, proudly claims to have extended his conquests as far as the Brahmaputra river.[5] How far the boasts of Yaśodharman were founded on fact it is difficult to say. But in any case the empire of Yaśodharman was a short-lived one and no trace of it was to be found after the

[1] *ASI.* 1930-34, p. 230.

[2] *IHQ.* IX. 784 ff; 989 ff; vol. X. 154 ff.

[3] No Gupta records have been found in Rāḍhā. Gupta coins have been discovered at Kalighat, Hooghly and Jessore (Allan, *CCBM.* CXXIV ff; *JASB.* LIII. 148 ff). As will be shown *infra* p. 52, Rāḍhā was probably administered by Vijayasena, a Governor of Vainyagupta at the beginning of the sixth century A.D.

[4] In the two Dāmodarpur CPP. (Nos. 1 and 2) of the reign of Kumāragupta, the Governor of Puṇḍravardhana is called simply '*uparika,*' but in those of Budhagupta (Nos. 3 and 4) and a later one (No. 5) he is called *Uparika-Mahārāja.*

[5] Mandasor Ins. l. 5. (*CII.* III. 146).

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middle of the sixth century A.D. The Gupta empire, already weakened by the inroads of the Hūṇas, collapsed before the onslaughts of Yaśodharman.

The fall of the Gupta empire, and the failure of Yaśodharman to rebuild one on a durable basis, led to the political disintegration of Northern India marked by the rise of a number of independent powers. The more prominent of these were the Pushyabhūtis of Sthāṇvīśvara (Thaneswar), the Maukharis of Kosala or Oudh and the Later Guptas of Magadha and Malwa. The Later Guptas may have been an offshoot of the Imperial Guptas, but as yet we have no positive evidence in support of this view. They, however, continued the traditions of the Gupta sovereignty in the central and eastern part of the Gupta empire. Bengal also took advantage of the political situation to shake off the foreign yoke and two powerful independent kingdoms *viz.*, Vaṅga and Gauḍa were established there in the sixth century A.D.

III. The Kingdom of Samataṭa or Vaṅga

The first independent kingdom that arose in Bengal on the ruins of the Gupta empire seems to have comprised originally the Eastern and Southern Bengal and the southern part of Western Bengal. Two of its important provinces administered by Governors were Vardhamāna-*bhukti* and Navyāvakāśikā (or Suvarṇavīthi),[1] roughly corresponding respectively to Western and Southern Bengal. It is highly probable that the headquarters of the rulers themselves were in East Bengal and that it was directly under their administration.

Five inscriptions[2] discovered at or near Koṭālipāḍā in the district of Faridpur and one in the Burdwan district[3] reveal the existence of three rulers of this kingdom named Gopachandra, Dharmāditya and Samāchāradeva. The title Mahārājādhirāja assumed by all

[1] See *supra* p. 26.

[2] Three of these were edited by F. E. Pargiter in *IA.* XXXIX (1910), pp. 193-216. These are (1) the Grant of Dharmāditya, Year 3; (2) Second Grant of the same king; and (3) Grant of Gopachandra, Year 18 (for date cf. *HNI.* 191). The fourth Grant, the Ghugrāhāti CP. of Samāchāradeva was edited by R. D. Banerji (*JASB.* N.S. VI. 429); Pargiter (*JASB.* N.S. VII. 476); and Dr. N. K. Bhattasali (*EI.* XVIII. 74 ff). Mr. R. D. Banerji held that "all these four grants are forgeries" (*JASB.* N.S. VI. 429 ff; VII. 289 ff; X. 425 ff). Dr. Bloch also regarded the copper-plate of Samāchāradeva as spurious (*ASI.* 1907-8, p. 256). Pargiter opposed this view (*JASB.* N.S. VII. 499; *JRAS.* 1912, pp. 710 ff) and their genuineness is no longer doubted by any scholar. The fifth copper-plate issued in Year 7 of Samāchāradeva, and found at Kurpālā, is yet unpublished.

[3] Mallasārul CP. of Gopachandra, Year 3. (*EI.* XXIII. 155).

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these kings proves that they were independent and powerful. This title, in contrast to the subordinate title of Mahārāja applied to Vainyagupta, who ruled shortly before them and perhaps over the same locality, undoubtedly indicates a changed status and the disappearance of the last vestige of the imperial authority of the Guptas over this region. The issue of gold coins by Samāchāradeva[1] supports the same conclusion.

A connection between the old and the new kingdom seems to be established by the fact that one Mahārāja Vijayasena was probably a vassal chief both of Vainyagupta and of Gopachandra.[2] The identity of the person of this name serving under these two kings cannot be definitely proved, but it is generally accepted,[3] and we may assume, therefore, that there was no long interval between the reigns of Vainyagupta (507-8 A.D.) and Gopachandra. If we assume further, as seems very likely, that Vijayasena, who ruled over the Vardhamāna-*bhukti* under Gopachandra, also held the same office under Vainyagupta, we may reasonably conclude that Vainyagupta ruled over Eastern, Southern and Western Bengal, and that this imperial province of the Guptas constituted an independent kingdom under Gopachandra and his successors.

Neither the relationship between the three kings Dharmāditya, Gopachandra and Samāchāradeva nor their order of succession can

[1] For gold coins of Samāchāradeva cf. *JASB.* N.S. XIX. *Num Suppl.,* 54 ff. The inference derived from the legends of these coins that Samāchāradeva was a vassal of Śaśāṅka (*IC.* IV. 225) must be definitely rejected. It rests upon the very doubtful reading *Śrī Narendravinata* on the reverse of the coin described by V. A. Smith in *IMC.* I. 120, pl. XVI, 11. Smith said that the three letters following Narendra "look like *vinata,*" but Allan has read the legend as *Narendrāditya* (*CCBM.* 149), and the legend on the reverse of the other type of coins of Samāchāradeva has been read with certainty by both Smith (*op. cit.* 122) and Allan (*op. cit.* 150) as *Narendrāditya.*

Mr. R. D. Banerji, on the other hand, read the legend in both cases as *Narendravinata* (*ASI.* 1913-14, p. 260) and held that it cannot be anything else. With all due deference to Mr. Banerji's emphatic assertion, the reading *Narendrāditya* seems to me to be preferable, and we may reasonably hold that Samāchāradeva assumed the title Narendrāditya in imitation of the Gupta kings.

But even assuming that the reading '*Narendravinata*' is correct, its interpretation as "fully subdued or obedient to Narendra," and the identification of Narendra with Śaśāṅka are of extremely doubtful character, to say the least of it. Against the inference based on a series of doubtful data must be placed the clear evidence of the inscriptions of Samāchāradeva that he was an independent monarch.

[2] Vijayasena is the Dūtaka of the Gunaighar Grant and is described as "*Mahāpratīhāra Mahāpilupati Pañchādhikaraṇ-oparika* and *Mahārāja Śrī-Mahāsāmanta*" (ll. 15-16, *IHQ.* VI. 55). In the Mallasārul Ins. he is called Mahārāja, but he uses his own seal.

[3] As to the contrary view (*IC.* VI. 106-7), cf. p. 53, f.n. 2, ll. 4-10.

be definitely determined. Pargiter's view[1] that Dharmāditya was the first king and "Gopachandra succeeded him, with no one intervening unless it was for a very short interval" is generally accepted. But if we assume the identity of Vijayasena, we should rather regard Gopachandra as the earliest of the three, and Dharmāditya as coming immediately after him.[2] Samāchāradeva is generally regarded as having flourished after the other two, but it is difficult to say whether there were one or more intervening kings, at present unknown to us.

The existence of a few kings of this line, later than Samāchāradeva, is rendered probable by a large number of gold coins found mostly in different parts of Eastern Bengal, notably at Sabhar (Dacca district) and Koṭālipāḍā (Faridpur district).[3] These are rude and debased imitations of Gupta coins, sometimes found along with those of Śaśāṅka and Samāchāradeva, which have been referred to the sixth or seventh century A.D. Only two of these coins bear names of kings that can be read with some degree of certainty. The first is a rude copy of Gupta coin of Archer type with the letters '*Pṛithu vī (ra)*' on the left, below the bow, and '*ja*' between

[1] *IA.* 1910, pp. 206 ff.

[2] Mr. Pargiter (*op. cit.*) regarded Dharmāditya as earlier than Gopachandra on two grounds *viz.*, (*i*) the use of earlier and later forms of *y* in their respective plates; (*ii*) the additional epithets *pratīta dharmaśīla* applied to the land-measurer Śivachandra in the plate of the latter. The first should never have been put forward as a serious argument, for experience has shown that palaeography does not offer a safe basis for comparative chronology within a short period of time, say, less than a century. This is clearly demonstrated in the present instance by the fact that in the Mallasārul CP. of Gopachandra the earliest of the three forms of *y* noted by Pargiter has been exclusively used, while the first plate of Dharmāditya (l. 27) shows a distinctly later form of *ś*. The addition of epithets to Śivachandra may no doubt be cogently explained by his attainment of seniority in service, but may be due to purely personal predilections of the writer. It may also be argued that the epithets were done away with after Śivachandra had been sufficiently long in service when his name was too well-known to require any testimonial. In any case this cannot be regarded as a more cogent argument in support of the priority of Dharmāditya over Gopachandra than the identity of Vijayasena of the Gunaighar and Mallasārul plates favouring the opposite view. For if Gopachandra ruled after Dharmāditya we have to assume that Vijayasena served as a Governor under Vainyagupta, Dharmāditya, Gopachandra and other kings, if any, who might have intervened between them. This is certainly not impossible, but less probable than the other view that Vijayasena served only two kings, Vainyagupta and Gopachandra. Although, therefore, no certain conclusion is possible, it seems more reasonable to take Gopachandra as earlier than Dharmāditya.

[3] For these coins cf. *IMC.* I. 120, 122 (pl. XVI. 11, 13); *CCBM.* cvi–cvii, 154 (pl. XXIV. 17-19); *JASB.* N. S. XIX. *Num. Suppl.* 58 ff; *Ibid.* XXI. *Num. Suppl.* 1 ff.

feet. The name of the king who issued it was probably, therefore, Pṛithuvīra, Pṛithujavīra or Pṛithuvīraja.[1]

The second coin belongs to a class of which several have been found. On most of them the legend has been read as *Sudhanyā*, but one appears to read *Śrī-Sudhanyāditya*.[2]

These kings, and others whose names are not recorded on the gold coins issued by them, presumably ruled in Vaṅga, and may be regarded as later rulers of the kingdom founded by Gopachandra. But nothing definite can be said about them until further evidence is forthcoming.

Gopachandra, who probably founded the independent kingdom, must have flourished not later than the second quarter of the sixth century A.D., *i.e.* within a generation of Vainyagupta, for as we have assumed above, Mahārāja Vijayasena was a vassal chief of both. The latest known dates of Gopachandra, Dharmāditya and Samāchāradeva are respectively the regnal years 18, 3 and 14. Their reigns may thus be placed approximately between 525 and 575 A.D. with the margin of a few years both at the beginning and at the end.

The six grants by these kings give interesting details about the provincial administration. All the records taken together undoubtedly imply that there was a free, strong, and stable government in Bengal which brought peace and prosperity to the people and made them conscious of their power and potentialities.

How and when this independent kingdom of Vaṅga came to an end is not known to us. We learn from the Mahākūṭa inscription[3] that the Chālukya king Kīrtivarman claimed to have conquered, among other countries, Aṅga, Vaṅga, Kaliṅga and Magadha. As Kīrtivarman ceased to reign in 597-98 A.D., his conquests in Bengal may be placed in the last quarter of the sixth century A.D. It is not impossible, therefore, that either Samāchāradeva, or one of his successors, was the adversary of Kīrtivarman. The nature and extent of Kīrtivarman's success are not known, but it might have some effect on the break-up of the kingdom of Vaṅga.

It is not also unlikely that the rise of the kingdom of Gauḍa under Śaśāṅka dealt the final death-blow to the independent kingdom of Vaṅga. This point will be further discussed in connection with the history of Śaśāṅka (see *infra* p. 59).

[1] Allan has described this unique coin in *Numismatic Chronicle*, Fifth Series, xiv. 235.

[2] *JASB*. N. S. xix. *Num. Suppl.* 60.

[3] *IA*. xix. 7.

IV. Rise of Gauḍa

The northern part of Western Bengal and the whole of Northern Bengal were evidently outside the dominions of Gopachandra and his successors. From about this period these territories came to be known as the Kingdom of Gauḍa, though this geographical term sometimes comprised the whole of Western Bengal.[1] Henceforth, throughout the Hindu period, Gauḍa and Vaṅga loosely denoted the two prominent political divisions of Bengal, the former comprising the Northern and either the whole or part of Western Bengal, and the latter, Southern and Eastern Bengal. Although actual political boundaries varied in different times, this rough geographical division persisted throughout the ages, but the names Puṇḍra or Varendrī (Northern Bengal), Rāḍhā or Suhma (Western Bengal), and Samataṭa or Harikela (Eastern Bengal) were also used.

The hold of the Imperial Guptas was far stronger over Gauḍa than over Vaṅga or Samataṭa. This explains the difference in the political evolution of these two constituent parts of Bengal. For while Vaṅga regained its independence in the first half of the sixth century A.D., the history of Gauḍa was a more chequered one. As we have seen above (*supra* p. 49), one of the Dāmodarpur copper-plates proves the Gupta sovereignty over Northern Bengal at least up to 544 A.D. It is very likely that the Gupta sovereign was a member of the Later Gupta dynasty. The Later Guptas might or might not have been connected by blood with the Imperial Guptas, but they were, to begin with, in possession of a substantial portion of the Gupta empire. That their pretensions as successors of the Imperial Guptas were tacitly recognised is proved by reference to the 'Gupta suzerainty' in the records of the Parivrājaka rulers of Bundelkhand in the sixth century A.D.[2]

One of the Later Gupta kings, Mahāsenagupta, claims to have defeated Susthitavarman (king of Kāmarūpa) on the banks of the Lauhitya or Brahmaputra river.[3] As he flourished towards the end of the sixth century A.D., it may be presumed that the suzerainty of

[1] For the extent of Gauḍa at different periods of history, see *supra* pp. 12-15. To the evidence cited there in order to show that Gauḍa included Rāḍhā and was situated close to the sea, the following may be added:

(*i*) According to the *Kathāsaritsāgara*, "in the country of Gaur there was a city Bardhamāna by name." (Tawney's transl. VII. 204).

(*ii*) The Gurgi Ins. of the 11th century A.D. states that '(out of fear of the Kalachuri king?) the lord of Gauḍa lies in the watery fort of the sea' (*EI*. XXII. 135).

[2] *CII*. III. 95, 102, 107.

[3] Aphasḍ Ins. ll. 10-11. *CII*. III. 203, 206.

the Later Guptas continued over Northern Bengal throughout that century. This presumption is strengthened by the consideration that we know of no independent ruler of Gauḍa before the end of the sixth century A.D., and the first known independent king Śaśāṅka, who flourished early in the seventh century A.D., probably began his life as a Mahāsāmanta, presumably under Mahāsenagupta. The probability, therefore, is that Gauḍa acknowledged the suzerainty of the Later Guptas down to the end of the sixth century A.D.

The Gupta suzerainty over Gauḍa during the sixth century A.D. does not appear to have been either peaceful or uninterrupted. If Yaśodharman really carried his triumphal march right up to the bank of the Brahmaputra river, as he claims, that event must have considerably weakened the power and position of the Guptas in Gauḍa. It is exceedingly likely that although the Gupta suzerainty in Gauḍa survived this catastrophe, it gradually became more nominal than real. That Gauḍa came to be regarded as an important political unit, by the middle of the sixth century A.D., is proved by the Haraha inscription of the Maukhari king Īśānavarman dated 554 A.D.[1] In v. 13 of this inscription the king claims to have defeated the lord of the Andhras and "made the Gauḍa people take shelter towards the sea-shore after causing their land territories to be deprived of their future prospects."[2] The exact meaning of the expression is obscure, but the general purport seems to be clear. Īśānavarman, in course of his victorious campaigns, came into conflict with the Gauḍas, ravaged their territories, and forced them to retreat towards the sea. The reference to the sea, combined with the expedition of Īśānavarman to the Andhra country, seems to indicate that the conflict with the Gauḍas took place in the southern part of Western Bengal. Although this region was geographically included in Gauḍa, it was at the time of Īśānavarman's conquest, probably a part of the kingdom of Vaṅga, founded by Gopachandra, as we have seen above (*supra* p. 52). It is thus difficult to decide whether Īśānavarman's adversary was a ruler of Vaṅga or Gauḍa proper. In the latter case we must presume that the whole of Western Bengal then formed part of the kingdom of Gauḍa and the kingdom of Vaṅga came to be confined to Southern and Eastern Bengal.

The fight between Īśānavarman and the Gauḍas must then be regarded as an episode in the long-drawn struggle between the Maukharis and the Later Guptas. For it is well-known that one

[1] *EI.* xiv. 110 ff.

[2] This passage has been differently (cf. *supra* p. 37, f.n. 3) interpreted. The translation quoted here is that of Dr. R. G. Basak, *HNI.* 111.

of the outstanding facts in the early history of the Later Guptas was the unceasing struggle with the Maukharis who coveted Magadha and Gauḍa, which adjoined their territories but formed part of the dominions of the former. It is not necessary, for our present purpose, to give a detailed account of this struggle, and a few salient facts must suffice. Īśānavarman, the most powerful of the Maukhari kings, conquered a part of Magadha and defeated the Gauḍas.[1] The fact that his successors Śarvavarman and Avantivarman granted a village in the Shahabad district shows that they, too, were in possession of a part of Magadha.[2] On the other hand, the Later Gupta king Kumāragupta defeated Īśānavarman, and his son Dāmodaragupta also defeated the Maukharis.[3] It is thus evident that in the hereditary struggle between the Guptas and the Maukharis victory inclined alternately to the two sides none of which could claim any decisive success. But fortunes were more favourable to the next Gupta king Mahāsenagupta who carried his victorious arms up to the Lauhitya or Brahmaputra river, if not beyond it, and defeated Susthitavarman, king of Kāmarūpa.[4] Now, whether the home territory of Mahāsenagupta was Malwa or Magadha,[5] a point on which opinions differ, it is evident that both Magadha and Gauḍa formed part of his dominions and he put an end to the Maukhari aggression in these territories. This is confirmed by the fact that no other Maukhari king is known to have any pretensions of suzerainty over them. As the recorded dates

[1] Haraha Ins., *EI.* XIV. 110 ff.

[2] Deo-Baranark Ins. of Jīvitagupta II, l. 15, *CII.* III. 216, 218. The ins. is fragmentary and the interpretation is conjectural.

[3] Aphsaḍ Stone Ins. of Ādityasena, ll. 7-8, *CII.* III. 203, 206.

[4] See *supra* p. 55, f.n. 3 and *JASB.* N.S. XVII. 321. Dr. R. K. Mookerji held (*Harsha,* 25, f.n. 1) that Susthitavarman belonged to the Maukhari dynasty. But as R. D. Banerji has shown, this is certainly erroneous (*JBORS.* XIV. 255). In spite of Dr. Mookerji's arguments to the contrary (*JBORS.* XV. 252 ff), it is now generally held that Susthitavarman was king of Kāmarūpa.

[5] Originally the scholars held that the Later Guptas ruled in Magadha, and Fleet designates them as Guptas of Magadha (*CII.* III. Introduction, p. 14). Dr. H. C Raychaudhuri pointed out that according to Deo-Baranark Ins. of Jīvitagupta II, the Maukhari kings Śarvavarman and Avantivarman held a considerable part of Magadha. He, therefore, held that "after the loss of Magadha the Later Guptas were apparently confined to 'Mālava' till Mahāsenagupta once more pushed his conquests as far as the Lauhitya" (*PHAI.* 2nd ed., p. 372, f.n. 3). Dr. R. K. Mookerji (*Harsha,* 60, 67), C. V. Vaidya (*Hist. Med. Hindu India,* I. 35) and Dr. D. C. Ganguly (*JBORS.* XIX. 402) definitely locate the Later Gupta dynasty in Malwa. Mr. R. D. Banerji controverted these views and tried to establish the older view that the Later Guptas ruled in Magadha (*JBORS.* XIV. 254 ff). Mr. Banerji's views have been challenged by Dr. R. K. Mookerji (*JBORS.* XV. 251 ff) and Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri (*JBORS.* XV. 651 ff). No definite conclusion on this point seems possible.

of Śarvavarman and Avantivarman are respectively 553-54 and 569-70 A.D.,[1] it may be presumed that the Maukhari menace was definitely over and Mahāsenagupta re-established his supremacy over Magadha and Gauḍa towards the close of the sixth century A.D.

The exact political status of Gauḍa during this period is difficult to determine. It is unlikely that the Later Gupta kings directly administered the territory. The probability is that it was ruled by a local chief who acknowledged their suzerainty. But by the beginning of the seventh century A.D., if not a few years earlier, Gauḍa formed an independent kingdom under Śaśāṅka, and Magadha also formed a part of his dominions. The rise of this independent kingdom was probably facilitated by the great calamity which befell Mahāsenagupta who, according to some scholars, was disastrously defeated by the Kalachuris. The extent of the calamity can be measured by the fact that in the year 595 A.D., Ujjayinī, which was according to those scholars the capital of the Later Gupta kingdom of Mālava, was in possession of the Kalachuri king Śaṅkaragaṇa, and the two young sons of Mahāsenagupta were forced to live in the court of king Prabhākaravardhana of Thaneswar, whose mother Mahāsenaguptā was probably a sister of Mahāsenagupta. This reconstruction of the history of Mahāsenagupta[2] cannot, of course, be regarded as certain, but, if true, it explains the rise of the independent kingdom of Gauḍa-Magadha out of the ruins of the Later Gupta empire. It also explains why Śaśāṅka, the founder of this independent kingdom, was involved in a war with the Maukhari king and the ruler of Kāmarūpa, the two great enemies of the Later Guptas, and formed an alliance with Devagupta, king of Mālava. In other words, the political traditions of the sixth century were continued in the seventh century A.D.

It is not also unlikely that the invasion of the Tibetan king Srong Tsan dismembered the kingdoms of the Later Guptas in Eastern India and helped the rise of Śaśāṅka.[3] Another important

[1] These dates are known from coins, cf. *JRAS*. 1906, p. 848. According to the reading of Mr. Dikshit the dates are respectively 577-78 and 579-80. The readings of the dates on coins are obviously conjectural and cannot be relied upon. (*TK*. 55-60).

[2] This view is fully developed by Dr. D. C. Ganguly (*JBORS*. XIX. 405 ff; *IHQ*. XII. 461) who even goes so far as to assert that it was the Kalachuri king Buddharāja, son of Śaṅkaragaṇa (and not Devagupta, as is generally held), who defeated and killed Grahavarman, the Maukhari king, and imprisoned his queen Rājyaśrī at Kanauj. These statements are not, however, supported by any reliable evidence and are based on the assumption that the Kalachuris were the only rulers of Mālava from 595 A.D. to 629 A.D. for which there is no proof (cf. *PHAI*. 4th ed., p. 514, f.n. 1).

[3] See *infra* pp. 91-93.

factor towards the same end may be found in the conquest of Kīrtivarman, the Chālukya king. As noted above (*supra* p. 54), he claims to have conquered Aṅga, Vaṅga, and Magadha, and this, if true, must have considerably weakened the position of the Later Guptas in Gauḍa and Magadha. Śaśāṅka might have taken advantage of this catastrophe to set up an independent kingdom in Gauḍa. The reaction of these important factors on the politics of Bengal is difficult to determine in view of the paucity of definite data, and the consequent uncertainty of all conclusions. We shall not, therefore, dwell any more on these speculative theories, but treat the history of Gauḍa under Śaśāṅka as an independent topic.

V. Śaśāṅka

Śaśāṅka occupies a prominent place in the history of Bengal. Unlike the three kings in lower Bengal who preceded him, he is more than a mere name to us. He is also the first known king of Bengal who extended his suzerainty over territories far beyond the geographical boundary of that province.

Of his early life and the circumstances under which he came to occupy the throne of Gauḍa we possess no definite information. A seal matrix cut in the rock of the hill-fort of Rohtasgarh records the name of 'Śrī-Mahāsāmanta Śaśāṅka' *i.e.* 'the illustrious great vassal Śaśāṅka.'[1] If this Śaśāṅka be the same as Śaśāṅka, king of Gauḍa, as has been usually held by scholars, it would follow that Śaśāṅka began his life as a subordinate ruler. Who his overlord was, we do not definitely know, but from what has been said in the preceding section (see *supra* p. 56), it appears most reasonable to hold that this overlord was no other than Mahāsenagupta. The theory that Śaśāṅka was originally a subordinate vassal of the Maukhari kings,[2] though not altogether improbable, is not supported by any convincing evidence. The view that Śaśāṅka was also known as Narendragupta is based on insufficient grounds, and even if it were true, there is hardly any justification for the belief that he was connected with the Guptas.[3]

[1] *CII.* III. 284.

[2] According to Dr. D. C. Ganguly, the Deo-Baranark Ins. "definitely settles that Śaśāṅka was a feudatory of Avantivarman and probably for a short period of his son Grahavarman" (*IHQ.* XII. 457). His fundamental assumption that Avantivarman was in possession of Magadha throughout his reign lacks any evidence. As noted *supra* p. 58, the probability is that Mahāsenagupta must have conquered Magadha, as otherwise he could hardly have proceeded up to the Brahmaputra river.

[3] *PHAI.* 4th ed., 514, f.n. 3; Allan, *CCBM.* LXIV. Mr. R. D. Banerji's view

All that we definitely know is that some time before 606 A.D. Śaśāṅka became the king of Gauḍa with his capital at Karṇasuvarṇa, which has been identified with Rāngāmāti, six miles south-west of Berhampur in the Murshidabad district.[1]

There is hardly any doubt that both Northern and Western Bengal were included in the dominions of Śaśāṅka. Whether they included also Southern and Eastern Bengal cannot be determined with any degree of certainty. While the distant military expeditions of Śaśāṅka lend colour to the supposition that he must have already conquered the whole of Bengal, there is no positive evidence in support of it. On the other hand, Hiuen Tsang's reference to Śīlabhadra, the Buddhist patriarch of Nālandā, as being a scion of the Brahmanical royal family of Samataṭa,[2] may be held to prove the existence of Samataṭa as a separate independent state in the first half of the seventh century A.D.

But whatever may be the extent of his rule in Bengal, Śaśāṅka's dominions probably included Magadha from the very beginning, and he soon felt powerful enough to follow an aggressive foreign policy. He extended his suzerainty as far south as the Chilka Lake in Orissa. For, in a record dated in the year 619 A.D., Mahārāja Mahāsāmanta Śrī-Mādhavarāja (II), the king of the Śailodbhava dynasty ruling over Koṅgoda, invokes the name of Śaśāṅka as the suzerain.[3] Although the exact boundaries of Koṅgoda are not known, there is no doubt that it comprised the region round the Chilka Lake in Orissa, and probably extended south to the Ganjām district.[4] In order to extend his power to the province of Koṅgoda, Śaśāṅka must have defeated the Māna chiefs whom we find in possession of the intervening territory in 602 A.D.[5] The details of this or other campaigns that Śaśāṅka must have waged in the south are unknown to us.

We are more fortunate in respect of the campaigns of Śaśāṅka in Northern India. As his chief adversary was the great emperor Harshavardhana, we get some detailed information of him from Bāṇabhaṭṭa's *Harsha-charita* and the account of the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang.

that Śaśāṅka was the son or nephew of Mahāsenagupta (*BI.* 105) has hardly any basis to stand upon.

[1] This view, propounded by Beveridge (*JASB.* 1893, pp. 315-328), is now generally accepted. Mr. M. Chakravarti, however, did not regard this identification as certain, and suggested that Karṇasuvarṇa may be identified with Gauḍa or Lakhanawati [*JASB.* N.S. IV. (1908), pp. 280-81].

[2] Watters, II. 109. For the probable existence of a Bhadra royal dynasty cf. *IC.* II. 795-97.

[3] Ganjam CP., *EI.* VI. 143 ff. [4] *JAHRS.* X. 7. [5] *Ibid.* 10-11.

It seems that the keynote of Śaśāṅka's foreign policy was to secure his dominions from the aggressive designs of the Maukhari rulers who had for three generations carried on a bitter struggle with the Later Guptas for the possession of Magadha and Gauḍa. The Maukharis had considerably improved their position by an alliance with the powerful rulers of Thaneswar, for the Maukhari king Grahavarman, the son of Avantivarman, had married Rājyaśrī, the daughter of Prabhākaravardhana, the Pushyabhūti ruler of Thaneswar. The Maukharis were also freed from any danger from the side of the Later Guptas. For Mahāsenagupta was probably the maternal uncle of Prabhākaravardhana, and in any case was definitely attached to his cause, as his two sons Kumāragupta and Mādhavagupta were sent to the court of Thaneswar to act as companions of the two young princes, Rājyavardhana and Harshavardhana. The prospect of Śaśāṅka was, therefore, gloomy in the extreme. But he was not slow to take advantage of the political situation. It seems that by shrewd diplomacy he succeeded in winning over to his side king Devagupta of Mālava[1] who had evidently taken possession of the dominions of Mahāsenagupta and was naturally hostile to the Thaneswar court for its alliance with the Maukharis, the hereditary enemies of his family. It is probable that Śaśāṅka had gradually extended his authority up to Benares before he decided to strike the final blow.[2] The fatal illness of Prabhākaravardhana gave the allies the required opportunity. The Mālava king defeated and killed Grahavarman and imprisoned his queen Rājyaśrī at Kanauj.[3] His next move was an invasion of Thaneswar itself.[4] As soon as these news reached Thaneswar, Rājyavardhana, who had just ascended the throne on his father's death, marched against Devagupta with a hastily collected army of ten thousand cavalry, leaving his younger brother Harsha in charge of the kingdom.[5]

It is difficult to trace in exact sequence the course of events that rapidly followed. The only facts of which we are certain are that Rājyavardhana defeated Devagupta, the Mālava king, and

[1] This generally accepted view, based on the simultaneous hostile operations of Śaśāṅka and Devagupta against the Maukharis and the Pushyabhūtis, has been challenged by Dr. D. C. Ganguly, who has reconstructed the whole history of the period on an entirely new basis (*IHQ*. XII. 461). But this has been sufficiently refuted by Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri (*PHAI*. 4th ed., pp. 513-514).

[2] *MMK*. Ch. 53, p. 634. *MMK(J)*. v. 715. *IHI*. p. 49.

[3] *HC. Tr*. 173. There is no conclusive evidence that Kanauj was the capital of the Maukharis, but it seems to be the most reasonable assumption on the basis of evidence at present available to us. (cf. *TK*. 32-36).

[4] *HC. Tr*. 173.

[5] *Ibid*. 174-76.

captured a large part of his army, but before he could relieve Kanauj, or even establish any contact with his sister Rājyaśrī, the widowed captive Maukhari queen, he was himself killed by Śaśāṅka.[1] While both Bāṇabhaṭṭa and Hiuen Tsang agree that Rājyavardhana was treacherously murdered by or at the instance of Śaśāṅka, they give different accounts of the incident. Again, Harshavardhana's own inscriptions tell us that Rājyavardhana met with his death in the house of his enemy owing to his adherence to a promise (*satyānurodhena*).

Apart from these conflicting versions, it is necessary to remember that the charge of treachery is brought against Śaśāṅka by two persons, Bāṇabhaṭṭa and Hiuen Tsang, whose writings betray a deep personal prejudice, amounting to hatred, against him. Besides, their story, on the face of it, is hardly credible. Hence some scholars are not disposed to accept at their face value the statements of the two contemporary writers about the treachery of Śaśāṅka.

The whole question has been discussed in an appendix to this chapter (see *infra* pp. 71-76) and need not be further dealt with here.

According to Bāṇabhaṭṭa, Rājyavardhana had started with ten thousand cavalry.[2] Of this a part must have been lost in his fight with Devagupta, and a part was sent back with Bhaṇḍi in charge of the captured forces of Mālava. It is, therefore, extremely unlikely that he himself advanced against Śaśāṅka. The probability, rather, is that Śaśāṅka marched forward to help his ally Devagupta, but could not come to his rescue till it was too late. There is hardly any doubt that Śaśāṅka's forces met those of Rājyavardhana. The latter with his reduced forces could hardly offer a successful resistance. Nor is it unlikely, in view of his subsequent conduct, that flushed with his successes, or unaware of Śaśāṅka's approach, Rājyavardhana did not take adequate measures for resisting the new, and perhaps unexpected danger. In any case, it may be safely presumed, on the basis of known facts, that either he was defeated before he died, or that his chances of gaining a victory were very weak, even if contrary to what Bāṇa says, his irrational credulity did not lead to his death at the hands of Śaśāṅka, before the contest was finally decided.

The death of Rājyavardhana in 606 A.D. left Śaśāṅka the master of the situation. But he was prudent enough not to push his successes too far. His main object was accomplished by the complete discomfiture of the Maukharis, and we may presume that his aggressive campaign in the west was at an end.

[1] *Ibid.* 178.

[2] *Ibid.* 175.

As soon as the news of the death of Rājyavardhana reached Harshavardhana, he took a solemn vow to punish Śaśāṅka, and marched with a vast army for taking vengeance upon the king of Gauḍa.[1] On his way he met the messenger of Bhāskaravarman, king of Kāmarūpa, and concluded an alliance with him,[2] presumably against the common enemy, Śaśāṅka. Proceeding still further, he met Bhaṇḍi[3] who told him about the details of Rājyavardhana's murder and of the escape of his sister Rājyaśrī from the prison. Harsha thought it to be his first duty to find out his sister, and leaving the army in charge of Bhaṇḍi, he went out in search of her. After a great deal of difficulty he traced her in the Vindhya forest just in time to save her from an act of self-immolation in fire along with her companions.[4] In the meantime Bhaṇḍi proceeded with the army against the Gauḍa king, and Harsha himself joined it on the bank of the Ganges after rescuing his sister.[5] Of the further progress of his vast army and the development of his "everlasting friendship" with Bhāskaravarman, we possess no definite information, nor are the results of Harsha's diplomatic and military preparations reported by either Bāṇabhaṭṭa or Hiuen Tsang.

The only reference to an actual conflict between Śaśāṅka and Harsha occurs in *Ārya-mañjuśrī-mūlakalpa*.[6] It is a late Buddhist chronicle narrating history, like the Purāṇas, in the guise of prophecies regarding future political events. But the most curious feature of the book is the peculiar way in which it refers to the kings, either by the first letter of the name or by a synonym, but never by the full proper name. While the chronicle has no claim to be treated as historical, it can justly be regarded as a collection of old and genuine traditions preserved in the Buddhist world in the mediaeval age.

There are good grounds for the belief that king 'Soma' mentioned in *Mañjuśrī-mūlakalpa* refers to Śaśāṅka, both being synonyms of moon. His adversary, 'the king whose name begins with 'Ha,' may be regarded as Harsha. With these assumptions, the following passage[7] may be taken as an interesting reference to the conflict between the two kings:

'At that time will arise in Madhyadeśa the excellent king whose name begins with (the letter) 'Ra' (*i.e.* Rājyavardhana) of the Vaiśya caste. He will be as

[1] *Ibid.* 187, 191, 206 ff; Watters, I. 343.
[2] *HC. Tr.* 216-223.
[3] *Ibid.* 224-225.
[4] *Ibid.* 249.
[5] *Ibid.* 258.
[6] The text was first edited by T. Ganapati Sastri and subsequently by Mr. Jayaswal in *IHI.*
[7] *IHI.* 50. The number of verses refers to *MMK(J)*; the corresponding verses in *MMK.* are on pp. 634-35.

powerful as Soma (Śaśāṅka). He also ends at the hand of a king of the Nagna caste (vv. 719-720).

'His younger brother Ha (Harshavardhana) will be an unrivalled hero. He decided against the famous Soma. The powerful Vaiśya king with a large army marched against the Eastern Country, against the excellent capital called Puṇḍra of that characterless man. (721-723)....He defeated Soma, the pursuer of wicked deeds; and Soma was forbidden to move out of his country (being ordered) to remain therein (thenceforth) (725). Ha returned having [or not having] been honoured in that kingdom of the barbarian.' (726).

How far the account of Śaśāṅka in *Ārya-mañjuśrī-mūlakalpa*, which, by the way, is somewhat vague and uncertain,[1] can be regarded as historical, it is difficult to say. It is at best a Buddhist tradition of the type referred to by Hiuen Tsang. It is interesting to note that the stories of Śaśāṅka's oppression against Buddhism, his foul disease, painful death, and going down to hell, as described by Hiuen Tsang are repeated in this Buddhist work. It would, therefore, be extremely unsafe to accept the statements recorded in this book as historical. But even if we assume the correctness of the statement, the net result of the elaborate campaign of Harsha, aided by his eastern ally Bhāskaravarman, king of Kāmarūpa, seems to be that, attacked on two flanks, Śaśāṅka had to fall back on his capital, and his enemies caused damage and destruction in his kingdom. But the enemies had to retire soon leaving him master of his own kingdom.

This view finds some support in a statement of Hiuen Tsang.[2] Referring to Kajaṅgala (near Rajmahal) he says that it ceased to be an independent state centuries ago and its capital was deserted.

"Hence when king Śilāditya in his progress to 'East India' held his court here, he cut grass to make huts, and burned these when leaving."

This shows that at some unspecified date Harsha led a military campaign as far as the borders of Bengal, but evidently went back without any material success. This may refer to the expedition against Śaśāṅka at the early part of his reign, and to this extent it supports the account of MMK. But it is equally likely that

[1] The interpretation of Dr. R. G. Basak summed up in the following passage seems quite as reasonable as that of Mr. Jayaswal:

"The author here means to say that Harsha defeated Soma (Śaśāṅka)....who was forced to remain confined within his own kingdom, and prevented him from moving further towards the west; and Harsha himself, not being honoured with welcome in these eastern frontier countries returned leisurely to his own kingdom with the satisfaction that he had achieved victory....There is little doubt that as the result of the first campaign Harsha could not establish political supremacy over Gauḍa." (*HNI.* 152).

[2] Watters, II. 183.

Hiuen Tsang here refers to the court held by Harsha at Kajaṅgala after his return from the conquest of Koṅgoda in 643 A.D.[1] Further, it is important to note that in his account of Puṇḍravardhana, Hiuen Tsang makes no mention of Harsha's invasion, such as is described in MMK.

But even if it is assumed, on the very doubtful authority of MMK., that Harsha had some success against Śaśāṅka, it must have been very short-lived. For according to Hiuen Tsang's own testimony, Śaśāṅka was in possession of Magadha at the time of his death,[2] which took place shortly before 637-38 A.D. This is confirmed by the statement recorded by Ma-Twan-Lin that Śilāditya assumed the title of king of Magadha in 641 A.D.[3]

Hiuen Tsang tells us that proceeding eastwards with his army, Harsha invaded the states which had refused allegiance, and waged incessant warfare, until, in six years, he had fought the five Indias.[4] If the implication of this statement is that Harsha subjugated the whole of India, or even Northern India, within six years of his accession *i.e.* by 612 A.D., the statement hardly deserves any serious consideration. On the other hand, it is not unlikely that Harsha undertook various military campaigns, probably including those against Śaśāṅka, during these six years. But he could not achieve any conspicuous success so far at least as Śaśāṅka was concerned, as the latter was in possession of Gauḍa, Magadha, Utkala and Koṅgoda long after 612 A.D.

Even assuming that Kanauj was the capital of the Maukharis, there is no reason to hold that Harsha's accession to the throne of Kanauj implied any discomfiture of Śaśāṅka. The entire episode about the conquest of Kanauj by Śaśāṅka and his ally Devagupta, as described in Bāṇa's *Harsha-charita*, is rendered somewhat mysterious by the fact that the official genealogy of the Maukhari kings, as recorded in a Nālandā seal,[5] makes it very doubtful whether Grahavarman ever sat on the Maukhari throne. According to Bāṇa, Grahavarman was the eldest son of Avantivarman, and yet the name of the son and successor of Avantivarman in the Nālandā seal, though partly effaced, is certainly not that of Grahavarman.

[1] Beal-*Life*. 172.

[2] Watters, II. 115. The passage, which has been quoted *infra* p. 66, shows that Śaśāṅka was in possession of Bodh-Gaya shortly before 637-38 A.D.

[3] *IA*. IX. (1880), p. 19.

[4] Watters, I. 343. Hiuen Tsang's further statement that after these six years of warfare Harsha reigned in peace for thirty years without raising a weapon is contradicted by his own statement about campaigns of Harsha against Koṅgoda (Beal-*Life*. 172).

[5] *EI*. XXIV. 283.

Bāṇa nowhere says distinctly that Grahavarman was the Maukhari king, but the title 'Deva' applied by him to Grahavarman, and the general tenor of his description certainly imply that Grahavarman had succeeded his father on the Maukhari throne. It is, of course, just possible that Grahavarman's name was omitted in the Nālandā seal as it merely gave a genealogical account and not a list of succession. A more detailed knowledge of the history of the Maukharis would perhaps throw new light on the activities of Śaśāṅka.

All that we know definitely is that Grahavarman was not the last Maukhari king, and a younger son of Avantivarman ruled over the kingdom, presumably after the defeat and death of his elder brother Grahavarman. Harsha's accession to the throne of Kanauj must, therefore, have taken place some years after the death of Grahavarman, and there is thus no reason to suppose that Harshavardhana occupied the kingdom of Kanauj by defeating Śaśāṅka. For it is equally plausible that Śaśāṅka put the younger brother of Grahavarman on the throne of Kanauj, and it was by defeating him at a later period that Harsha ascended the throne of Kanauj. On the whole, making due allowance for the paucity of information at our disposal, and the fact that it is derived mostly from the accounts of hostile and prejudiced writers, we are bound to hold that Śaśāṅka's political and military career was a successful one. Beginning his life as a vassal chief, he made himself master of Gauḍa, Magadha, Utkala and Koṅgoda, and consolidated his position by defeating the powerful Maukharis. Although this involved him in hostility with two of the most powerful potentates in Northern India *viz.*, the kings of Thaneswar and Kāmarūpa, he held his own against this powerful combination and maintained his extensive dominions till his death.

The date of his death cannot be exactly determined, but it must have taken place after 619 A.D. and before, probably very shortly before, 637 A.D.

While travelling in Magadha in 637-38 A.D. Hiuen Tsang[1] noted that in recent times Śaśāṅka cut down the Bodhi tree at Gayā and ordered the removal of the image of Buddha in a neighbouring temple. On hearing that his order was executed, so runs Hiuen Tsang's account, king Śaśāṅka was seized with terror, his body produced sores and his flesh rotted off, and after a short while he died. This account of Śaśāṅka's death, which is reproduced in MMK.,[2] is undoubtedly inspired by the hatred which the Buddhists felt for him on account of his anti-Buddhistic

[1] Watters, II. 115; Beal-*Records*. II. 118, 121-22.
[2] *MMK*. 635. *IHI*. 50.

activities.[1] Curiously enough, an echo of this tradition is found even in late genealogical works of Bengal Brāhmaṇas.[2] According to the traditions preserved among a section of the Graha-Vipra (also called Śaka-dvīpa) Brāhmaṇas, they are descended from twelve Brāhmaṇas living on the banks of the Sarayū river, who were summoned to treat an incurable disease from which Śaśāṅka, the king of Gauḍa, was suffering. This tradition, however, says that Śaśāṅka was cured and rewarded the Brāhmaṇas who then settled in Bengal.

Hiuen Tsang has recorded numerous acts of oppression perpetrated by Śaśāṅka against the Buddhists.[3] According to him one of the reasons urged by Bodhisattva to induce Harsha to ascend the throne was that he might "then raise Buddhism from the ruin into which it had been brought by the king of Karṇasuvarṇa."[4] This is, in a way, a confession that Buddhism suffered a great decline on account of the activities of Śaśāṅka. The latter was a devotee of Śiva,[5] and his active patronage of Śaivism might have hastened the process of decline which had already set in in Buddhism. But how far the acts of oppression, charged by Hiuen Tsang against Śaśāṅka, can be regarded as historically true, it is difficult to say. At present, it rests upon the sole evidence of the Buddhist writers who cannot, by any means, be regarded as unbiassed or unprejudiced, at least in any matter which either concerned Śaśāṅka or adversely affected Buddhism.

Indeed, such religious intolerance on the part of a king was so rare in ancient India, that some scholars, who are not disposed altogether to disbelieve the Buddhist stories about Śaśāṅka, have sought to explain away this unusual conduct. They attribute Śaśāṅka's action to political exigencies, on the supposition that the Buddhists in Magadha and other parts of Śaśāṅka's kingdom were in league with the Buddhist emperor Harshavardhana with whom Śaśāṅka was engaged in a prolonged struggle.[6] This is, however,

[1] *MMK.* also adds 'oppression upon Jainism.'

[2] *VJI.* IV. 88, 90. *Mahādeva-kārikā* quoted by Umesh Chandra Sarma; *Kulapañjī* by Rāmadeva.

[3] Extermination of Buddhism and expulsion of Buddhists from a Vihāra in Kuśinagara (Watters, II. 43); throwing into the Ganges a stone, containing foot-prints of Buddha, in Pāṭaliputra (p. 92); cutting down the Bodhi-tree, destroying its roots down to the water, and burning what remained (p. 115); attempt to remove an image of Buddha and replace it by that of Śiva (p. 116).

[4] Watters, I. 343.

[5] His coins bear the image of Mahādeva on the obverse, Allan, *CCBM.* 147-48. The last incident referred to in f.n. 3 above, also corroborates the view that Śaśāṅka was Śaiva.

[6] R. P. Chanda in *GR.* 13; R. D. Banerji in *BI.* 110-11; *EHBP.* 25.

a pure conjecture, based on similar tendencies displayed by the Buddhists at a later age to sacrifice national for the sake of sectarian interests.[1]

Although sufficient data are not available for forming a correct estimate of the character and achievements of Śaśāṅka, he must be regarded as a great king and a remarkable personality during the first half of the seventh century A.D. He was the first historical ruler of Bengal who not only dreamt imperial dreams, but also succeeded in realising them. He laid the foundations of the imperial fabric in the shape of realised hopes and ideals on which the Pālas built at a later age. He successfully avenged the humiliation inflicted upon his country by the Maukhari rulers, and gave a new turn to that age-long duel between Gauḍa and Kanauj which constitutes an important feature in North Indian politics for more than five hundred years. With friendly biographers like Bāṇa and Hiuen Tsang, he would probably have appeared almost as brilliant as Harshavardhana to posterity. But their undisguised enmity has blackened his name and tarnished his fame. The discovery of fresh evidence alone can enable us to form a just picture of his career and a fair estimate of his character.

[1] According to *Chachnāma* (Eng. trans. by M. K. Fredunbeg, pp. 72, 89ff, 105), the Buddhists of Sind effectively helped the Muslim invaders of that country.

APPENDIX I

THE GUPTA KINGDOM IN BENGAL

Dr. D. C. Ganguly has propounded the view that "the early home of the Imperial Guptas is to be located in Murshidabad, Bengal, and not in Magadha."[1]

The view is based on the tradition recorded by I-tsing that "Mahārāja Śrī-Gupta built a temple for the Chinese priests and granted twenty-four villages as an endowment for its maintenance. This temple, known as the 'Temple of China,' was situated close to a sanctuary called Mi-li-kia-si-kia-po-no[2] which was about forty *yojanas* to the east of Nālandā, following the course of the Ganges."[3]

Allan, in opposition to Fleet, proposed to identify this Śrī-Gupta with Mahārāja Gupta who founded the Gupta dynasty and was the grandfather of Chandragupta I. Allan, however, located the temple in Magadha, and took I-tsing's statement to imply that Gupta was in possession of Pāṭaliputra.[4] To Dr. D. C. Ganguly belongs the credit of pointing out that according to the distance and direction given by I-tsing the temple must have been situated in Bengal. From this fact Dr. Ganguly concludes that the original home of the Guptas was in Bengal and not in Magadha.

Dr. Ganguly's view about the location of the temple is strikingly confirmed by a fact which was noted long ago by Foucher, but to which sufficient attention has not been paid by scholars.[5] In an illustrated Cambridge MS. (Add. 1643) dated 1015 A.D., there is a picture of a Stūpa, with the label "Mṛigasthāpana-Stūpa of Varendra." Foucher has pointed out that Mṛigasthāpana is the Indian original represented by I-tsing's Mi-li-kia-si-kia-po-no, although Chavannes doubtfully restored it as Mṛigaśikhāvana. It would, therefore, follow that the 'Temple of China' was near the Mṛigasthāpana Stūpa in Varendra, and must have been situated either in Varendra, or not far from its boundary, on the bank of the Bhāgīrathī or the Padmā.

The statement of I-tsing would thus justify us in holding that one Mahārāja Śrī-Gupta was ruling in Varendra or near it.

[1] *IHQ.* XIV. 532-535.

[2] Dr. Ganguly inadvertently takes this (Mṛigaśikhāvana ?) as the temple founded by Mahārāja Gupta (*op. cit.* 532).

[3] Chavannes, *Religieux Eminents* (I-tsing), pp. 82-83. Beal-*Life.* XXXVI.

[4] *CCBM.* XV, XIX.

[5] Foucher, *Icon.* 62-63.

Whether he is to be identified with the founder of the Gupta dynasty depends upon the interpretation we put upon the further statement of I-tsing that Mahārāja Śrī-Gupta flourished more than[1] five hundred years before his time. If we interpret it too literally, Gupta must be placed towards the close of the second century A.D., about a hundred years before the founder of the Gupta family. But, as pointed out by Chavannes and Allan, "I-tsing's statement is a vague one and should not be taken too literally." Allan holds that "considering the lapse of time and the fact that the Chinese pilgrim gives the statement on the authority of a tradition handed down from ancient times by old men, there seems no reason to doubt the identification on chronological grounds."[2]

These are undoubtedly forceful arguments and cannot be lightly set aside. Although, therefore, we may not accept Dr. D. C. Ganguly's view 'that the early home of the Imperial Guptas is to be located in Murshidabad, Bengal, and not in Magadha,' it is a valid presumption that parts of Bengal were included in the territory ruled over by the founder of the Gupta family. This presumption, however, cannot be regarded as established historical fact unless further corroborative evidence is forthcoming. For it is solely based on a tradition recorded by a Chinese pilgrim four centuries later, and is opposed to the Purāṇic testimony[3] which includes Prayāga, Sāketa and Magadha, but not any region in Bengal, among the early dominions of the Guptas.

[1] "........il y a plus de cinq cents années" (Chavannes, *op. cit.* 83).
[2] *CCBM.* xv.
[3] Pargiter, *Dynasties of the Kali Age*, 53, 73.

APPENDIX II

ŚAŚĀṄKA

A brief review of the facts that may be definitely ascertained about Śaśāṅka has been given above (see *supra* pp. 59-68). We propose here to examine critically and consider in some detail the accounts given in Bāṇabhaṭṭa's *Harsha-charita* and Hiuen Tsang's *Travels*.

As noted above, Bāṇabhaṭṭa narrates in detail how Harsha rescued his sister and then joined on the bank of the Ganges the large army which he had equipped for punishing Śaśāṅka. It is unfortunate, however, that he brings his narrative to a close at this critical point, leaving us totally in the dark about the encounter between Harsha and Śaśāṅka. What is worse still, some of the most important details even in this incomplete story are left vague and obscure. Bāṇabhaṭṭa, for example, does not care to explain why Rājyaśrī fled to the remote Vindhya forest instead of seeking shelter in her brother's dominions which were much nearer and easier of access. But the more significant, and from our point of view, the more unfortunate, omission on the part of Bāṇa, is in respect of the activities of Śaśāṅka. From the message he puts in the mouth of Saṁvādaka, a servant of Rājyaśrī, it appears that on the very day on which the death of Prabhākaravardhana was rumoured, Grahavarman was killed, and his queen fettered and confined into prison at Kanauj by the wicked Lord of Mālava.[1]

This account is supplemented by the statement of Bhaṇḍi:

> "I learnt from common talk," said he, "that after His Majesty Rājyavardhana was taken to paradise and Kānyakubja was seized by the man named Gupta, queen Rājyaśrī burst from her confinement and with her train entered the Vindhya forest."[2]

Later, the attendants of Rājyaśrī told Harsha the

> "full story of his sister's misfortunes from her imprisonment onward,—how she was sent away from Kānyakubja, from her confinement there during the Gauḍa trouble, through the action of a noble man named Gupta,—how she heard the news of Rājyavardhana's death, and refused to take food, and then how, faint for want of food, she wandered miserably in the Vindhya forests, and at last in her despair resolved to mount the funeral pile."[3]

It is surprising that Bāṇabhaṭṭa did not notice the apparent inconsistencies between the three versions of the same story.

[1] *HC. Tr.* 173. [2] *Ibid.* 224. [3] *Ibid.* 250.

According to Saṁvādaka, Kanauj was captured by the Lord of Mālava (Devagupta) and perhaps the same king is referred to as Gupta by Bhaṇḍi. But the attendants ascribe the imprisonment of Rājyaśrī to 'Gauḍa trouble.' Further, whereas according to Bhaṇḍi, Rājyaśrī *burst from her confinement*, presumably by eluding or in defiance of Gupta who had seized Kanauj, the attendants ascribe her release to the kind action of a noble man named Gupta. On the important question whether this Gupta is identical with the Gupta of Bhaṇḍi, Bāṇabhaṭṭa is distressingly silent.

Bhaṇḍi's statement, being admittedly based on common talk, is less reliable than the versions of the servant and attendants of Rājyaśrī who were eye-witnesses to the event. We may thus reasonably infer that shortly after Devagupta had captured Kanauj by defeating and killing Grahavarman, Śaśāṅka marched to the help of his ally and reached Kanauj. In the meantime, Devagupta, intoxicated with his recent success, proceeded towards Thaneswar without waiting for the arrival of his ally Śaśāṅka, and met with his doom. It is evident, however, that Śaśāṅka still retained his hold on Kanauj, and Rājyavardhana had an encounter with him. Bāṇabhaṭṭa does not give any details about the subsequent movements of these two adversaries, but merely states that Rājyavardhana "had been allured to confidence by false civilities on the part of the king of Gauḍa, and then, weaponless, confiding, and alone, despatched in his own quarters"[1] What the exact allurements were, and why the king was foolish enough to enter into the enemy's camp without proper escort or safeguard, Bāṇabhaṭṭa does not care to explain.

Hiuen Tsang, the other contemporary writer, is equally vague and obscure on this point. He tells us that Śaśāṅka frequently told his ministers, with reference to Rājyavardhana, "that if a frontier country has a virtuous ruler, this is the unhappiness of the mother kingdom," and then adds, "on this they (*i.e.* the ministers) asked the king to a conference and murdered him." Later, Hiuen Tsang quotes the following speech of Harsha's ministers: "Owing to the fault of his (Rājyavardhana's) ministers, he was led to subject his person to the hand of his enemy, and the kingdom has suffered a great affliction; but it is the fault of your ministers."[2] This is hardly consistent with Bāṇa's version,[3] for no heedless act

[1] *Ibid.* 178. [2] Beal-*Records*. I. 210-11.

[3] St. Julien's translation of the above passage, which is more decisive on this point, runs as follows (*IA.* 1878, p. 197): "But by the incapacity of his (Rājyavardhana's) ministers he has gone and fallen under the sword of his enemy; that has been a great disgrace to the realm. It is we who are to blame."

of the king under the influence of temptation or allurement, but a deliberate plan (or conspiracy ?) of the ministers was responsible for the course of events which ultimately put Rājyavardhana in the clutches of his enemy. Besides, emphasis is laid here on the fault of the ministers and not on any treacherous act of Śaśāṅka. To these two contemporary accounts we have to add a third, *viz.*, the statement contained in the inscriptions[1] of Harsha that Rājyavardhana gave up his life at the house of his enemy owing to his adherence to a promise (*satyānurodhena*).

On the basis of the above accounts, historians are generally agreed that Śaśāṅka treacherously murdered Rājyavardhana. Mr. R. P. Chanda[2] was the first to challenge the accuracy of the view and gave cogent reasons to show that Rājyavardhana was either defeated and taken prisoner or surrendered to Śaśāṅka. Mr. R. D. Banerji[3] and the present writer[4] also supported Mr. Chanda. This view is, however, opposed by Dr. R. G. Basak[5] and Dr. D. C. Ganguly[6] who have reiterated the old theory of Śaśāṅka's treachery.

This controversy is not likely to be closed until fresh evidence enables us to reach definite conclusions. In the meantime, the arguments on both sides may be summed up to enable the reader to form his own judgment.

The main argument adduced by Dr. Basak and Dr. Ganguly is the agreement between the contemporary sources. But it may be pointed out, that while Bāṇabhaṭṭa and Hiuen Tsang agree that Rājyavardhana was murdered in a treacherous manner, the two authorities differ in essential details, and further the third contemporary source, the inscriptions of Harsha, and one version of Hiuen Tsang make no allusion to treachery at all. Curiously enough, all these accounts are characterised by a deliberate vagueness and obscurity which is difficult to account for.

Following the ordinary canons of criticism the charges of Bāṇa and Hiuen Tsang against Śaśāṅka must be accepted with a great deal of reserve. Both were prejudiced against him on account of his hostility against their patron, and Hiuen Tsang made no secret of his wrath against Śaśāṅka for his anti-Buddhist activities. That Hiuen Tsang was ready, nay almost glad, to believe anything discreditable to Śaśāṅka, is abundantly clear from the various stories he has recorded of Śaśāṅka's persecution of Buddhism, and his ignoble death.[7] The attitude of Bāṇa is also quite clear from the

[1] *EI.* IV. 210; I. 67. [2] *GR.* 8 ff. [3] *BI.* 107.
[4] *EHBR.* 17-18. [5] *HNI.* 144ff. [6] *IHQ.* XII. 462ff.
[7] These have been referred to *supra* p. 67, f.n. 3.

contemptuous epithets like *Gauḍādhama* and *Gauḍabhujaṅga* by which he refers to Śaśāṅka.

Such witnesses would be suspect even if their stories were complete, rational, and consistent. But unfortunately both the stories are so vague and involve such an abnormal element as would not be believed except on the strongest evidence. Hiuen Tsang does not refer to any ill feeling or hostility between Śaśāṅka and Rājyavardhana, nor even any conflict of interests. Nothing but pure jealousy at Rājyavardhana's virtue prompts Śaśāṅka to incite his ministers to murder him. Apart from the irrational character of the whole story, it is sufficiently refuted by the fact that according to Bāṇa, Rājyavardhana's rule was so short that Śaśāṅka could have hardly any opportunity to be deeply impressed by his virtue, and "*frequently*" addressed his ministers on that subject.

The story of Bāṇabhaṭṭa presupposes that although Rājyavardhana was out to fight with Śaśāṅka, who was his mortal enemy and in occupation of Kanauj where Rājyaśrī was still kept in prison, he could be tempted to meet his adversary, alone and without any weapon. The story is neither rational nor complete, for Bāṇabhaṭṭa does not even care to mention the nature of allurements which might explain or excuse such an unusual step taken by Rājyavardhana. Dr. R. G. Basak tries to cover this vital defect by assuming that neither Harsha nor Bhaṇḍi knew clearly about the allurement offered by Śaśāṅka to Rājya,[1] and Bāṇa had special reason to conceal the details. How Bāṇa came to know what was unknown to both Harsha and Bhaṇḍi, Dr. Basak does not tell us. Nor does he explain how Śaṅkara, the commentator of Bāṇa, who flourished centuries later,[2] knew the details of the story though they were not recorded by Bāṇa. It seems that, in this particular case, contrary to the ordinary principle, the accurate knowledge of the details of an event grows in proportion to the lapse of time.

According to Śaṅkara,[3] Śaśāṅka enticed Rājyavardhana through a spy by the offer of his daughter's hand, and while the unlucky king with his retinue was participating in a dinner in his enemy's camp he was killed by the Gauḍa king in disguise. This story is hardly consistent with Bāṇa's account that Rājyavardhana was alone and defenceless when he was killed in his enemy's house.

[1] *HNI.* 148. But it is said in *Harsha-charita* that when Harsha met Bhaṇḍi, "he enquired the facts of his brother's death, and Bhaṇḍi related the whole story in full." (*HC. Tr.* 224).

[2] Dr. Ganguly places Śaṅkara in the 14th century A.D. *IHQ.* XII. 462.

[3] *HNI.* 149.

Dr. Basak, oblivious of this inconsistency, accepts the story as correct and remarks, "It is quite plausible, that during a period of truce the offer of the hand of his daughter to Rājyavardhana was made by Śaśāṅka, and lest Rājyavardhana's heedless compliance with such an invitation sent through a messenger should tarnish the reputation of the king, Bāṇa refrained from giving full details of this incident in his book."[1]

Bāṇa could not have such a story in view, for it is inconsistent with his own account, and there appears to be no valid reason for suppressing it.

The above analysis would show that there are legitimate grounds for doubting the accuracy of the story. Dr. D. C. Ganguly observes that "there is no warrant for thinking that Bāṇa and Hiuen Tsang blackened the character of Śaśāṅka with accusations knowing them to be false."[2] Unfortunately such instances are not rare. References to Sirāj-ud-daulā, Napoleon and Tipu Sultan by contemporary English writers, and the contradictory versions of the encounter between Shivaji and Afzal well illustrate the unwillingness or incapacity of hostile writers to give impartial account of dreaded foes. The last instance perhaps furnishes an apt parallel to the Śaśāṅka-Rājyavardhana incident. The Mahratta and Muslim writers accuse respectively Afzal and Shivaji of treachery. In the present instance we have only the version of Kanauj. The Bengali version might have painted the scene in an altogether different way. For the present we can accept the statement in Harsha's inscriptions that Rājyavardhana gave up his life, in his enemy's house, where he went for the sake of a promise, or, as Dr. Basak puts it, to keep his word of honour. That this enemy was Śaśāṅka also admits of little doubt. Further details of this incident may be revealed some day by the discovery of fresh evidence, but until then the modern historians might well suspend their judgment and at least refrain from accusing Śaśāṅka of treachery, a charge not brought against him even by the brother of the murdered. It may also be emphasised that even Buddhist traditions were not unanimous in respect of the treachery of Śaśāṅka. For according to the generally accepted interpretation of MMK., Rājyavardhana was murdered, not by Śaśāṅka, but by a king of the Nagna caste.[3]

In conclusion, it may be pointed out that Hiuen Tsang's emphasis upon the fault of the ministers in respect of Rājyavardhana's death becomes very significant when we remember that Rājyavardhana was a Buddhist and his ministers were most

[1] *Ibid.* [2] *IHQ.* XII. 463. [3] *IHI.* 50.

probably orthodox Hindus. Hiuen Tsang refers to an attempt on Harsha's life by the non-Buddhists.[1] Who knows that Rājyavardhana's death was not similarly encompassed by his ministers with the help of Śaśāṅka who was known to be a great champion of orthodox faith? This is, of course, a mere hypothesis, which lacks convincing evidence, but it would explain the mysterious vagueness of the contemporary authorities and prove that there might be other explanations of Rājyavardhana's death than the treachery of Śaśāṅka.[2]

[1] Beal—*Records*. I. 220-21.

[2] An apt illustration is furnished by the capture of the Roman emperor Valerian by the Persian king Shapur in A.D. 260. It is generally held that in course of negotiations for peace, "the Persian king expressed his desire for a personal interview; the emperor agreed; in fatal confidence he met the Persian king and was taken prisoner." The following comment is made in *Cambridge Ancient History* (Vol. XII. p. 135) on this episode: "On the fact of the capture our sources are in complete accord, but they disagree in their accounts of the manner in which it was effected. While Zosimus represents it as a treacherous breach of faith on the part of Shapur, others would place it after a battle with insufficient forces against the superior strength of the enemy, others again—and this must certainly be false—will have it that Valerian had fled from beleaguered Edessa to the Persian King in face of a mutiny of his own starving soldiers."

CHAPTER V

POLITICAL DISINTEGRATION AFTER ŚAŚĀṄKA.

I. Kingdom of Gauḍa

The death of Śaśāṅka proved to be a political disaster of the first magnitude. Not only were the dreams of a far-flung Gauḍa empire rudely shattered, but within a few years his kingdom, including the capital city Karṇasuvarṇa, passed into the hands of Bhāskaravarman, the hostile king of Kāmarūpa. The events that led to this complete collapse are not known, and only a few facts of this obscure period in the history of Bengal may be gleaned from the documents at present available to us.

Hiuen Tsang who travelled in Bengal about 638 A.D., shortly after the death of Śaśāṅka, mentions, besides Kajaṅgala (territory round Rajmahal), four kingdoms in Bengal proper, *viz.*, Puṇḍra-vardhana, Karṇasuvarṇa, Samataṭa, and Tāmralipti.[1] The first two undoubtedly denote the two component parts of Śaśāṅka's kingdom *viz.*, North Bengal and northern parts of Western Bengal including Burdwan, Birbhum, Murshidabad, and Nadia districts. Hiuen Tsang refers to the capital of each of the kingdoms mentioned by him, but does not say anything of their kings and gives no indication of their political status. This silence has led some scholars to think that they were included within the empires of Harshavardhana.[2] But this assumption is not supported either by the general tenor of Hiuen Tsang's description or by any facts known so far.

It is obvious from Hiuen Tsang's account that Śaśāṅka's death loosened the bonds which united North and West Bengal, and these formed separate kingdoms in 638 A.D. Within a few years both

[1] Watters, II. 182-193. Beal-*Records*. II. 193-204.

[2] The fallacy of this view has been pointed out in *JBORS*. IX. 312 ff. and *IHQ*. XV. 122. But Dr. R. G. Basak repeats the same and even improves upon it. "The reason," says he, "for Yuan Chwang not mentioning the name of any king ruling in any of the four or five political divisions of Bengal at that period may be sought in the fact that when he visited (in 643 A.D.) these countries and also Kāmarūpa, he found most of them included in Harsha's own dominion, *and some in that of Bhāskaravarman* (Italics is ours)," *HNI*. 227. It may be mentioned in passing that Hiuen Tsang visited Bengal about 638 A.D. and not 643 A.D. as stated above (Watters, II. 335). Mr. Tripathi has merely echoed the old view without any fresh argument (*TK*. Chs. IV-V; *JBORS*. XVIII. 296 ff).

these kingdoms were conquered by Bhāskaravarman. The fact that Bhāskaravarman made a grant from the victorious camp at Karṇasuvarṇa[1] shows that he even succeeded in seizing the capital city of Śaśāṅka.

This may also be indirectly concluded from some incidents referred to in the *Life* of Hiuen Tsang. It is recorded there that some time about 642 A.D., Bhāskaravarman proceeded with his army of elephants, 20,000 in number, to meet Harsha at Kajaṅgala near Rajmahal, and his 30,000 ships passed along the Ganges to the same destination.[2] This evidently implies an effective suzerainty of the king of Kāmarūpa over the former dominions of Śaśāṅka.[3]

It is interesting to note that, according to the *Life* of Hiuen Tsang, at the time of this meeting Harsha himself had just returned from his victorious campaign in Koṅgoda,[4] the kingdom of the Śailodbhavas who formerly acknowledged the suzerainty of Śaśāṅka.

Now Hiuen Tsang's account, as preserved in his *Records*, does not refer to Puṇḍravardhana and Karṇasuvarṇa as subject to Bhāskaravarman, and as regards Koṅgoda, it even goes so far as to say that its soldiers "rule by force the neighbouring provinces, so that no one can resist them."[5] It would thus appear that the dominions of Śaśāṅka in and outside Bengal proper were conquered respectively by Bhāskaravarman and Harsha some time between 638 and 642 A.D. The only exception was Magadha which evidently passed into the hands of one Pūrṇavarman, described as last of the race of Aśokarāja, at the time when Hiuen Tsang visited

[1] Nidhanpur CP. (*EI.* XII. 65; XIX. 115). [2] Beal–*Life.* 172.

[3] This point was emphasised for the first time by Dr. D. C. Ganguly (*IHQ.* XV. 122 ff). It should be remembered, however, that the passage of Bhāskara's army and ships can also be explained by the assumption of Harsha's suzerainty over Bengal. Bhāskara's conquest of Bengal is assumed on the authority of Nidhanpur CP., but it is equally probable that after Śaśāṅka's death his dominions both in Bengal and Orissa were conquered by Harsha. The turmoil following the death of Harsha might have enabled Bhāskaravarman to conquer Bengal and pitch his victorious camp at Karṇasuvarṇa. In any case, he must have occupied Bengal by 648 A.D. when he is referred to as king of Eastern India in Chinese annals in connection with the expedition of Wang-hiuen-tse. This view has been fully developed in my *Outlines of Anc. Ind. Hist. and Civilisation,* p. 348. For other views on the subject, cf. *HNI.* 225-229. It is difficult to accept Dr. Basak's suggestion that Bhāskaravarman never conquered Karṇasuvarṇa, but merely pitched his temporary camp there, as an ally of Harsha during the latter's second campaign (*HNI.* 228-29). It would have been highly impolitic, to say the least of it, on the part of Bhāskaravarman to issue a formal royal edict from a place which belonged not to him but to a mighty king like Harsha. Further, as noted above, he is definitely referred to as king of Eastern India in the Chinese annals.

[4] Beal–*Life.* 172. [5] Beal–*Records.* II. 207.

it about 637-38 A.D.[1] But in or about 641 A.D. it was conquered by Harshavardhana.[2] Kajaṅgala also was presumably conquered by Harsha.

Thus the available evidences seem to indicate that the death of Śaśāṅka was followed by a disruption of his vast dominions and its component parts formed separate independent states. This gave the required opportunity[3] to his life-long enemies Bhāskaravarman and Harshavardhana who conquered respectively his former dominions in and outside Bengal.

The political disintegration of the Gauḍa empire after the death of Śaśāṅka seems to be referred to in that curious Buddhist work *Ārya-mañjuśrī-mūlakalpa* mentioned above. The relevant passage has been translated as follows by Mr. Jayaswal:

"After the death of Soma the Gauḍa political system (*Gauḍa-tantra*) was reduced to mutual distrust, raised weapons and mutual jealousy—one (king) for a week; another for a month; then a republican constitution—such will be the daily (condition) of the country on the bank of the Ganges where houses were built on the ruins of monasteries. Thereafter Soma's (Śaśāṅka's) son Mānava will last for 8 months 5 (½ ?) days."[4]

This English rendering of the relevant passage by Mr. Jayaswal cannot be regarded as free from doubts, particularly as the reference to a republican constitution is based on an emendation of the text. But it undoubtedly conveys the general sense of the text.

The passage immediately following the above extract in MMK. almost undoubtedly refers to a king Jayanāga of Gauḍa,[5] and there is equally little doubt that he is to be identified with the king of that name whose coins have been found in Western Bengal,[6]

[1] *Ibid.* 118.

[2] This may be inferred from the following statement by Ma-Twan-Lin: "In the fifteenth year of the Ching-Kiwan Period (641 A.D.) Śilāditya assumed the title of king of Mo-kie-tho (Magadha) and sent an ambassador with a letter to the emperor" [*IA.* IX. (1880) 19].

[3] It must be emphasised, that apart from conjectures based on pre-conceived notions about Harsha's military exploits, and inferences based on doubtful evidences of negative character, the only two positive references to Harsha's conquests in Eastern India are those of Magadha in 641 A.D., and Koṅgoda the following year (apart from a temporary court held at Kajaṅgala referred to *supra* p. 78). The reasonable presumption, therefore, is that Harsha led victorious campaign in these regions after, and not before, Śaśāṅka's death.

[4] *IHI.* 51. The word *Gaṇajya* has been emended to *gaṇarājya.*

[5] *Nāgarāja-samāhveyo Gauḍa-rājā bhavishyati|*
ante tasya nṛipe tishṭhaṁ jayādyāvarṇatadviśau|| *MMK.* p. 636.

Jayaswal reads 'Nagarāja' in place of Nāgarāja [*MMK(J).* v. 750] and takes Nāgarāja to be the name of the king and regards him as belonging to the Bhāraśiva dynasty (*IHI.* 51).

[6] For Jayanāga's coins cf. Allan, *CCBM.* LXI, CIV., 150-51. The coins bear

and who issued a land-grant from the victorious camp of Karṇasuvarṇa, the capital of Śaśāṅka.[1]

Although the tradition recorded in MMK. cannot be regarded by itself as historical, it is corroborated in the present instance by known facts. The general picture of anarchy, confusion, and political disintegration is fully confirmed by the conquests of Harsha and Bhāskaravarman, and merely supplies the details of a presumption to which they inevitably lead. The reference to Jayanāga is also corroborated, as noted above, by coins and inscription of a king named Jayanāga who ruled with Karṇasuvarṇa as capital.

The date of Jayanāga cannot be ascertained with precision, but judging from his coins and inscription, he may be placed within the period 550-650 A.D. On the basis of the tradition recorded in MMK., we may hold that after the anarchy and confusion caused by the invasion of Bhāskaravarman had subsided, and a son of Śaśāṅka had vainly tried to re-establish the fortunes of his family, the kingdom passed into the hands of Jayanāga.[2] He is styled Mahārājādhirāja and was evidently a ruler of some authority. He ruled over Birbhum and Murshidabad districts, but the extent of his kingdom or any other detail of his reign is not known to us.

For more than a century after this the history of Gauḍa is obscure in the extreme. This period which extends roughly from 650 to 750 A.D. was marked at the beginning by political chaos and confusion in Eastern India caused by the death of Harsha (646 or 647 A.D.), the usurpation of his kingdom by his minister, and the strange military adventures of the Chinese envoy Wang-hiuen-tse.[3]

But the success of the Chinese arms brought into prominence

the name *Jaya* and there is no doubt now that they were issued by Jayanāga (*EI.* XVIII. 62).

[1] Vappaghoshavāṭa Grant (*EI.* XVIII. 60 ff), or Malliya Grant (*ABORI.* XIX. 81). It records a grant of land situated in Audumbarika-*vishaya* which has been identified with Audambar *Pargana* mentioned in *Ain-i-Akbari.* It comprised the greater part of Birbhum and a part of the Murshidabad district (*EI.* XIX. 286-87). Sāmanta Nārāyaṇabhadra was the ruler of this *vishaya* at the time of the grant.

[2] Dr. R. G. Basak writes: "The *Mañjuśrī-mūlakalpa* makes Jayanāga almost a successor of Śaśāṅka, but in our opinion, he and his son (stated to have reigned for a few months only) preceded Śaśāṅka as kings of Karṇasuvarṇa" (*HNI.* 140). Dr. Basak gives no reason, and in the absence of more reliable evidence or cogent arguments to the contrary, it is better to accept the tradition recorded in MMK. Dr. Basak refers to a son of Jayanāga, but MMK. refers to the son of Śaśāṅka, and not of Jayanāga, as having ruled for eight months and five days. It is just possible that Jayanāga ruled after the death of Śaśāṅka and before the conquest of Karṇasuvarṇa by Bhāskaravarman.

[3] This has been dealt with in detail *infra* p. 92.

a new factor in North Indian politics. The powerful king of Tibet, Srong-tsan Gampo, who exercised suzerainty over Nepal and had sent military assistance to the Chinese in their hour of need, is credited with extensive conquests in India. There is no reliable record of his exploits, but he is said to have conquered Assam and gradually made himself master of nearly the half of India.[1] In spite of obvious exaggerations the claims were probably not without some basis. We have definite evidence that the dynasty of Bhāskaravarman was overthrown not long after his death by a Mlechchha ruler.[2] It is also not improbable that the Khaḍga kings who ruled over parts of Bengal in the seventh century A.D. came in the train of the Tibetan invasion,[3] though of this we have no definite evidence. Although the Tibetan supremacy was short-lived and Indian states threw off the suzerainty of Tibet about 702 A.D.,[4] the menace of Tibetan invasion probably played an important part in Indian politics.

Another important political factor was the re-establishment of the Later Gupta power in Magadha. That this province was included for a short time in the empire of Harsha admits of no doubt.[5] But not long after his death it came into the possession of Ādityasena. He and his three successors ruled over this kingdom in the latter half of the seventh and the beginning of the eighth century A.D.[6] They all assumed imperial titles and were evidently very powerful rulers. Some scholars hold that Bengal, or at least a large part of it, was included in their empire,[7] but we have no reliable evidence of any kind to support this view.

[1] Lévi–*Nepal.* II. 174. See also *infra* pp. 91-93. [2] *DHNI.* I. 239.

[3] *EHBR.* 24. It must be noted, however, that important persons with the title Khāḍgi are mentioned in Mallasarul Ins. (6th cent. A.D.) (*EI.* XXIII. 159).

[4] Lévi-*Nepal.* II. 174-75. [5] See *supra* p. 79, f.n. 2.

[6] The history of Ādityasena and his successors, Devagupta, Vishṇugupta and Jīvitagupta II is known from six inscriptions (*CII.* III. Nos. 42-46 and Vaidyanātha Temple Ins. at Deoghar, *CII.* III. p. 213 f.n.). All the four kings bear imperial titles *viz.*, Paramabhaṭṭāraka and Mahārājādhirāja. All their records have been found in Bihar. No. 46 is issued from the Jayaskandhāvāra of Gomatīkoṭṭaka and Fleet suggests that it was on the bank of the river Gomatī. This is, however, by no means certain. The only other evidence of their rule outside Bihar is furnished by the Vaidyanātha Temple Ins. of which no facsimile is published, and which was written in Maithila character (*JASB.* LII. 190-91). It says that Ādityasena, having arrived from the Chola city, performed three Aśvamedha and other sacrifices. Dr H. C. Raychaudhuri thinks that these Later Gupta kings are referred to as Lords of the whole of Uttarā-patha (*sakal-ottarā-patha-nātha*) (*PHAI.* 4th ed., pp. 516-17). No 43 gives the date 66 for Ādityasena, which, referred to Harsha Era, would be equivalent to 672 A.D. Ādityasena and his three successors may thus be placed approximately between 650 and 725 A.D.

[7] Dr. R. G. Basak thinks that 'Bengal, specially the Southern Rāḍha and Vaṅga' probably formed parts of Ādityasena's dominions as he extended his

We learn from an inscription[1] of a king of the Śaila dynasty named Jayavardhana that the brother of his great-grandfather defeated the Pauṇḍra king and conquered his dominions. According to this record the Śaila dynasty had a remarkable history. Their original home was in the valley of the Himālayas, but they conquered the Gurjara country. Later, they spread to the east and ultimately three branches of the family established themselves at Kāśi, the Vindhya region, and Pauṇḍra. It is said that the two chiefs who conquered Kāśi and Pauṇḍra were brothers, and the son of the former became the lord of the Vindhya regions.

The Pauṇḍra kingdom, conquered by the Śailas, has been identified by all scholars with Northern Bengal, on the ground that this region was known as both Puṇḍra and Pauṇḍra.[2] Unfortunately, no details of the Śaila rule in Bengal are known to us. The conquest probably took place about 725 A.D.[3]

The next important event in the history of Bengal is the defeat and death of the king of Gauḍa at the hands of Yaśovarman, the king of Kanauj, who undertook a military expedition all over Northern India to establish his position as Lord Paramount like Harshavardhana and Yaśodharman. The date of Yaśovarman's conquests may be approximately fixed between 725 and 735 A.D. He evidently regarded the Lord of Gauḍa as one of his chief adversaries, and his success against the latter has obtained great prominence on account of the title of a famous poetic work *Gauḍa-vaho* ('Slaying of the King of Gauḍa') by his court-poet Vākpatirāja.[4] Curiously enough, the poem itself, consisting of 1209 verses, refers only once (v. 1194), very incidentally, to the slaying of the Gauḍa king, while five verses (vv. 354, 414-417) refer to the Lord of Magadha. The latter fled before Yaśovarman in the Vindhya region (v. 354), but the other kings who accompanied him immediately returned to fight (v. 414). After describing the battle in two verses (vv. 415, 416), the poet simply says that Yaśovarman, having slain the king of the Magadhas, who was fleeing, proceeded to the sea-shore (v. 417).

It has been assumed that the Lord of Gauḍa and Lord of Magadha, mentioned by Vākpati, were one and the same person.

conquests towards the shores of the ocean (*HNI*. 128). He evidently relies on the statement in the Vaidyanātha Temple Ins. that Ādityasena conquered the whole earth upto the shore of the four oceans. But such praises are too conventional to be regarded seriously. Nor can we infer the supremacy of the Later Guptas in Bengal from the very hypothetical proposition that they were Lords of Uttarāpatha (see *supra* p. 81, f.n. 6).

1 Ragholi CP. (*EI*. IX. 41).

2 Cf. Belava CP. l. 27. *BI*. 20. 3 *DHNI*. I. 276.

4 *Gauḍa-vaho*, edited by Śaṅkar Pāṇḍurang Paṇḍit (Bombay, 1887).

The assumption has led to a further one *viz.* that Gauḍa was subject to the Later Gupta kings of Magadha. But even if the first assumption be correct, the second does not necessarily follow. The emphasis laid on Gauḍa in the very title of the poem would rather lead to the inference that Magadha was subject to the king of Gauḍa.[1] But all these assumptions must be regarded as purely provisional on account of the obscurity of the poem *Gauḍa-vaho* which has been discussed in detail in Appendix II.

Yaśovarman followed up his victory against Gauḍa by the conquest of Vaṅga. Thus nearly the whole of modern Bengal passed into his hands. The nature of his rule is not known to us, but it could not have been of long duration. For the promising career of Yaśovarman was cut short by the disastrous defeat inflicted upon him by Lalitāditya, the king of Kashmir, before the close of the first half of the eighth century A.D., and probably not long after 736 A.D.[2]

Lalitāditya naturally regarded himself as the overlord of the various states which had acknowledged the suzerainty of Yaśovarman. Presumably to enforce this claim, he undertook a *digvijaya* or an expedition of conquest. According to Kalhaṇa's account his victorious campaign not only led him across the whole of Northern India right up to Kaliṅga, but also over the whole of Southern India up to the river Kāverī and the Malaya mountains. To what extent this may be regarded as historically true it is difficult to say. As regards Bengal, with which alone we are here concerned, there is no direct reference in Kalhaṇa's account that Lalitāditya invaded, far less conquered, any part of the province. But two incidents reported by Kalhaṇa lead to the presumption that the kingdom of Gauḍa acknowledged his suzerainty.

In the first place, we are told that a troop of elephants from Gauḍa-maṇḍala joined Lalitāditya,[3] and it is only reasonable to conclude that the king of Gauḍa acknowledged the suzerainty of Lalitāditya and sent his elephant troops to help him. Secondly, Kalhaṇa relates how the king of Gauḍa was forced to visit Kashmir

[1] The conquest of Magadha is perhaps to be credited to the Śaila rulers of Northern Bengal. As noted above, two other branches of this family ruled in Vindhya region and Benares, and this circumstance must have helped the Śaila ruler of Bengal to wrest the supremacy of Magadha, probably from Jīvitagupta II, the last known ruler of the Later Guptas, who reigned in the first half of the eighth century A.D.

[2] For different views, cf. *Gauḍa-vaho*, 2nd ed., pp. cclvi ff.

[3] *RT.* IV. 148. Dr. H. C. Ray states that Lalitāditya "reached the Gauḍa land" (*DHNI.* I. 277). This is, however, by no means certain, though very probable. In any case *RT.* does not refer to Lalitāditya's march to Gauḍa.

at the behest of Lalitāditya, and was murdered there.[1] The Gauḍa king had evidently some fear about his safety, and to remove it, Lalitāditya swore by an image of Vishṇu that no violence would be done to his person. In spite of this guarantee Lalitāditya caused the Gauḍa king to be murdered at a place called Trigrāmi. Here, again, the distant journey undertaken by the Gauḍa king, in spite of misgivings about his own safety, can be reasonably explained only on the supposition that he acknowledged the suzerainty of Lalitāditya.

The sequel to the murder of the king of Gauḍa is interesting enough to be recorded here. Kalhaṇa relates how some loyal and faithful followers of the Gauḍa king took a solemn vow to avenge the foul murder, made the long journey from Gauḍa to Kashmir in the guise of pilgrims, and attacked the temple which contained the Vishṇu image by which Lalitāditya swore the safety of the Gauḍa king. With a full knowledge of certain death, these people entered the temple and broke one of the two images found there, unhappily the wrong one. In the meantime, soldiers came from the capital and cut all the Gauḍas to pieces. The Kashmirian poet has paid the highest tribute to the loyalty and devotion of these people. "Even the creator," says he, "cannot achieve what the Gauḍas did on that occasion," and "to this day the world is filled with the fame of the Gauḍa heroes."[2] The story, romantic though it is, is probably true, for otherwise Kalhaṇa would not have reported it, knowing fully how thoroughly it discredits his ideal king Lalitāditya.

Same reliance, however, cannot be placed on another romantic story recorded by Kalhaṇa about Jayāpīḍa, the grandson of Lalitāditya. But though its historical character may well be doubted, a brief account of the curious episode may be given for what it is worth.

Jayāpīḍa, the grandson of Lalitāditya, set out with a vast army for conquering the world, in imitation of his grandfather. But his kingdom was usurped, during his absence, by his brother-in-law Jajja, and he was deserted by his army. Ultimately he dismissed all his soldiers and wandered alone. In course of this romantic enterprise, he entered the city of Pauṇḍravardhana which was then ruled by a prince called Jayanta, as a subordinate chief to the kings of Gauḍa. He married Jayanta's daughter, defeated the five Gauḍa chiefs and made his father-in-law their overlord.[3]

It is difficult to say what amount of truth, if any, there is in

[1] *RT.* IV. 323-30. [2] *RT.* IV. 332, 335. [3] *RT.* IV. 402-468.

this story. But the reference to five Gauḍa kings indicates a state of political disintegration which is supported by other evidences. It appears very likely that Gauḍa became a field of struggle for supremacy among a number of local chiefs who had asserted their independence as there was no central authority to keep them under control.

Another reference to a foreign conquest of Gauḍa, about this period, occurs in an inscription of Jayadeva II, the Lichchhavi king of Nepal. In this record, dated 759 or 748 A.D., the king's father-in-law, Harsha of the Bhagadatta dynasty, is described as the lord of Gauḍa, Uḍra, Kaliṅga and Kośala.[1] The fact that the rulers of Kāmarūpa claimed descent from Bhagadatta has led to the presumption that Harsha was ruler of Kāmarūpa.[2] We must remember, however, that the Kara dynasty of Orissa also claimed descent from the same family,[3] and it is equally probable that Harsha belonged to that dynasty. In any case we have no independent evidence about the possession of Gauḍa by any ruler of either Kāmarūpa or Orissa, and it is difficult to say how far the assumption of the title 'lord of Gauḍa' was justified by actual exercise of authority in that kingdom.

II. Kingdom of Vaṅga

We have no definite information about the political condition of Vaṅga during the reign of Śaśāṅka. But even if it were incorporated in his dominions, it must have again formed an independent state shortly after his death. Hiuen Tsang has referred to the kingdom of Samataṭa, which seems to have included the major part, if not the whole, of Vaṅga proper.[4] How long the independent kingdom established in this region by Gopachandra continued to exist and how it ended are unknown to us. We learn from Hiuen Tsang that a line of Brāhmaṇa kings ruled in Samataṭa in the first half of the seventh century A.D. But he does not give us any information about it beyond stating that Śīlabhadra, the

[1] Paśupati Ins. dated year 153 (*IA*. IX. 178) This year is usually referred to the Harsha Era (*HNI*. 268), but Jayaswal refers this and other dates in Nepalese records to a new era starting in 595 A.D. (*JBORS*. XXII. 164 ff, 184).

[2] *GR*. 17-18; *DHNI*. I. 241; Lévi–*Nepal*. II. 171. Harsha is usually identified with king Harsha mentioned in Tejpur CP. of Vanamāla (*JASB*. IX. Part II. 766; *Kām. Śās*. 54).

[3] Cf Chaurasi Grant of Śivakara (*JBORS*. 1928, p 304). Some scholars, while holding Harsha to be a king of the Kara dynasty, believes him also to be a descendant of Bhāskaravarman (*IHQ*. XIV. 841).

[4] It is difficult to ascertain the boundaries of Samataṭa which must have varied at different ages. The district of Tippera was definitely included in it

patriarch of Nālandā, was a scion of this royal family.[1] Reference may be made in this connection to a vassal chief named Jyeshṭhabhadra, mentioned in the Nidhanpur copper-plate of Bhāskaravarman. The name-ending *-bhadra* has led some scholars to connect him with Śīlabhadra and to postulate the existence of a Bhadra dynasty ruling in Bengal.[2] Although there is not sufficient evidence in support of this view, it is not an unlikely one. This Brahmanical royal dynasty seems to have been overthrown by a line of Buddhist kings whose names contained the word *khaḍga* as an essential element. The history of this dynasty, generally referred to as the Khaḍga dynasty, is known from two copper-plates found at Ashrafpur, 30 miles north-east of Dacca,[3] and a short record inscribed on an image of Sarvāṇī (Durgā) found at Deulbāḍī, 14 miles south of Comilla.[4] These disclose the names of three rulers *viz.*, Khaḍgodyama, his son Jātakhaḍga, and the latter's son Devakhaḍga. They also refer to the queen and the son of the last named king, *viz.* Prabhāvatī and Rājarāja, also called Rājarājabhaṭa. They were all devout Buddhists.

Khaḍgodyama is described as *nṛipādhirāja* (overlord of kings) and seems to have been the founder of the kingdom. The records unfortunately do not contain any historical information, beyond the usual vague praises, about him or his successors. Of the two copper-plate grants of Devakhaḍga, one is dated in his 13th regnal year, and the date of the other is doubtful.[5] Both were issued from the royal camp of Karmānta-*vāsaka*, which was probably their capital. This city has been identified with modern Baḍkāmtā, a

(see *supra* p. 17). The account of Hiuen Tsang, however, shows that Samataṭa was an extensive kingdom in his days. "This country," says he, "which was on the sea side and was low and moist, was more than 3,000 *li* in circuit" (Watters, II. 187). From Samataṭa the "pilgrim journeyed west for over 900 *li* to Tāmralipti." (*Ibid.* 189). From these indications the kingdom of Samataṭa in the 7th century A.D. may be reasonably regarded as having comprised the area bounded by the old course of the lower Brahmaputra river in the north, Chittagong Hills in the east, and the Bay of Bengal on the south. The western boundary was perhaps formed by a branch of the old Ganges (Padmā) corresponding to modern Gorai and Madhumati rivers. Cunningham held that Samataṭa denoted the delta of the Ganges and its chief city occupied the site of modern Jessore. Fergusson and Watters identified it respectively with Dacca and Faridpur districts. (Watters, II. 188).

[1] Watters, II. 109.

[2] *IC.* II. 795-97. As mentioned *supra* p. 80, f.n. 1, a vassal chief Nārāyaṇabhadra is mentioned in the Ins. of Jayanāga.

[3] *MASB.* I. No. 6, pp. 85-91. [4] *EI.* XVII. 357.

[5] *JASB.* N.S. XIX. 375 ff; *HNI.* 203.

Police station in the Tippera district,[1] but this identification cannot be regarded as certain.

The date of these kings is also a matter of dispute. Some scholars refer them to the 9th century A.D.,[2] while others hold that they ruled during the latter part of the seventh and the beginning of the eighth century.[3] Apart from the evidence of palaeography, on which both the theories are mainly based, the latter view seems to be supported by certain references in I-tsing's account of fifty-six Buddhist priests of China who visited India and the neighbouring parts during the latter half of the seventh century A.D. One of these priests, Sheng-Chi by name, found Rājabhaṭa ruling over Samataṭa,[4] and this ruler has been identified by most scholars with Rājarājabhaṭa of the Khaḍga dynasty.[5] From the same work of I-tsing, we know that a certain Buddhist temple situated about 228 miles east of Nālandā[6] was originally founded by Śrī-Gupta, but the land belonging to it "has now reverted to the king of Eastern India, whose name is Devavarmā."[7] This king has been identified by some with Devagupta[8] of the Later Gupta dynasty of Magadha, and by others with Devakhaḍga.[9] It must be remembered, however, that the temple in question was undoubtedly situated in Bengal. Further, Magadha, the home-territory of the Later Guptas, is placed by I-tsing in Mid-India[10] and not Eastern India, which is described by him as bounded by Tāmralipti in the south (and west) and Harikela in the east.[11] The identification of Devavarmā with Devakhaḍga, therefore, appears to be more reasonable. The Chinese evidence, thus interpreted, leads to the conclusion that the Khaḍga dynasty ruled approximately between 650 and 700 A.D. and their kingdom comprised nearly the whole of Eastern and Southern Bengal. But these conclusions must be regarded as tentative.

1 *EI.* XVII. 351; *JASB.* N.S. x. 87 2 *BI.* 233; *MASB.* I. No. 6, pp. 85 ff.

3 *JASB.* N.S. XIX. 378; *JASB.* N.S. x. 86; *HNI.* 202.

4 Beal–*Life.* XL-XLI; Chavannes, *Religieux Eminents (I-tsing)*, p. 128, f.n. 8.

5 *JASB.* N.S. XIX. 378; *HNI.* 207. 6 *IHQ.* XIV. 534.

7 Beal–*Life.* XXXVI-XXXVII; Chavannes, *op. cit.*, p. 83; *IHQ.* XIV. 534.

8 Dr. R. G. Basak was presumably led to this view (*HNI.* 130) by the mistaken belief that the land granted by the king was situated near Mahābodhi temple in Gayā, whereas, as noted above, it was more than two hundred miles further to the east, in Bengal (*supra* p. 69).

9 *JASB.* N.S. XIX. 378.

10 Bodh-Gayā is referred to as situated in Mid-India in connection with the biography of Hiuen-Ta'i (Beal–*Life.* XXX; Chavannes, *op. cit.*, p. 35).

11 Takakusu-*I-tsing.* pp. XXXI. XLVI; Chavannes, *op. cit.*, pp. 121, 106; Beal–*Life.* XL-XLI. Tāmralipti is called the southern district of Eastern India from which people went towards Mid-India, showing that it was on the south-western border of East India.

The Tippera copper-plate grant of Sāmanta Lokanātha[1] introduces us to a line of feudatory chiefs ruling in East Bengal in the region round Tippera. The founder of the family is described as a paramount ruler, *adhimahārāja*. His name is lost, except the last two letters *-nātha*. His successor Śivanātha is, however, referred to as *sāmanta*. Nothing of importance is known of the next two rulers after whom came Lokanātha who issued the charter.

The facts recorded about Lokanātha are somewhat vague and obscure. It appears that he defeated an army sent against him by his suzerain (*parameśvara*). On the other hand, another king, Jīvadhāraṇa by name, occupied a part or whole of the kingdom of Lokanātha, but gave up the fight and restored the territory, as the latter obtained the royal charter, presumably from the suzerain. There is a further reference to a fight between Jayatuṅgavarsha and Lokanātha. The natural presumption is that Lokanātha rebelled against his suzerain Jayatuṅgavarsha, and scored an initial success by defeating the army of the latter. But he was ultimately defeated by Jīvadhāraṇa, another feudatory chief of Jayatuṅgavarsha. He then submitted to his suzerain, and his dominions were restored to him. But neither Jayatuṅgavarsha, which was obviously a title rather than a proper name, nor Jīvadhāraṇa can be identified.[2]

The copper-plate of Lokanātha is dated in words, but unfortunately the portion containing the figure for hundreds is lost, and the extant part gives us only the year 44. Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar restores it as 144, and refers it to Harsha Era which would make it equivalent to 750 A.D.[3] Dr. R. G. Basak, on the other hand, restores the date as 344, and referring it to the Gupta Era obtains the date 663-64 A.D.[4] for Lokanātha. The palaeographical evidence, according to Dr. Basak, also refers the inscription to the seventh century A.D. If we accept this date, we may reasonably hold the view that Lokanātha was a feudatory of the Khaḍga dynasty, and Jayatuṅgavarsha was a *biruda* (title) of either Khaḍgodyama or Jātakhaḍga. It may be added that according to the copper-plates of the Khaḍgas, Jātakhaḍga annihilated his enemies and Devakhaḍga had under him a number of feudal rulers who paid court to him. But whether the Khaḍgas exercised supremacy over Lokanātha or not, there is no valid reason to suppose, as some scholars have done, that both these dynasties acknowledged a common suzerain, far less that this suzerain was the king of Kāmarūpa.[5]

1 *EI*. xv. 301-315.
2 For a fuller account cf. *HNI*. 195 ff.
3 *IA*. LXI. 44.
4 *HNI*. 195.
5 *EHBP*. 29; *IC*. II. 37-45.

The history of the Khaḍga dynasty after Rājarājabhaṭa is not known to us. According to the traditions recorded by the Tibetan monk Tāranātha, to which detailed reference will be made in the next chapter,[1] the Chandra dynasty had been ruling in Vaṅga (and occasionally also over Gauḍa) as early as the middle of the seventh century A.D., and its last two rulers Govichandra and Lalitachandra reigned during the last part of the seventh and the first part of the eighth century A.D. It is not improbable that Govichandra supplanted the Khaḍgas and re-established the supremacy of his dynasty.

If we may believe in Tāranātha's statement, it was probably during the reign of Lalitachandra that Yaśovarman invaded Vaṅga. It is, however, equally or perhaps more likely that the king of Vaṅga opposing Yaśovarman was a Khaḍga king. But whoever he may be, he was, according to *Gauḍa-vaho,* no mean enemy, and possessed large elephant forces (v. 419). The author of *Gauḍa-vaho* pays indirectly a high tribute to the people of Vaṅga when he says that 'their faces assumed a pale colour while offering obeisance to the victor, because they were not accustomed to such an act (v. 420).' This testimony to the peoples' bravery and love of freedom was perhaps based on the personal knowledge of the author. The suzerainty of Yaśovarman was probably more nominal than real, and in any case it was short-lived. There is no evidence to show that either of the two other foreign rulers, Lalitāditya or Harsha, who probably exercised supremacy over Gauḍa, had any pretensions of suzerainty over Vaṅga.

According to Tāranātha, the death of Lalitachandra was followed by a period of anarchy and confusion. There was no king ruling over either Gauḍa or Vaṅga, and as he characteristically puts it, every Kshatriya, Grandee, Brāhmaṇa, and merchant was a king in his own house.

The contemporary records also describe the political condition of Bengal in the middle of the eighth century A.D. as '*mātsya-nyāya,*'[2] a technical term used in treatises on politics to denote the absence of a central ruling authority, resulting in a chaotic state, where every local chief assumes royal authority and might alone is right.

This lamentable state of political disintegration was undoubtedly caused by the series of foreign invasions and the successive changes of ruling dynasties in Gauḍa and Vaṅga referred to above. They

[1] For references to Tāranātha's account in this chapter cf. App. I. to Ch. VI. *infra.*
[2] Khalimpur CP. *Pāla Ins.,* No. 2.

shattered the political fabric reared up with so much care by Gopachandra, Dharmāditya, Samāchāradeva and Śaśāṅka. Bengal lapsed into a state of political inanity and the people must have suffered untold miseries. But the very grave peril and the extremity of the evil brought its own remedy.

APPENDIX I

RELATIONS OF TIBET WITH INDIA

Some time between 581 and 600 A.D., an obscure chief named Srong Tsan united the scattered hill tribes and founded a powerful kingdom in Tibet. He had an army of about 1,00,000 soldiers and led a victorious campaign to Central India, a term used by the Chinese to designate Bihar and probably also sometimes U. P. as distinguished from Eastern India comprising Bengal and Assam. The nature and extent of his conquest are not known to us, but it has been suggested that the era known as *San* and current in Bengal and Assam commemorates this forgotten foreign invasion of Bengal. The name of the era, *San*, equivalent to the last part of the name of the Tibetan king, and its epoch 593-594 A.D. both favour this hypothesis,[1] but it goes against the generally accepted view that the era originated in the time of Akbar by the conversion of Hijra into a solar year.[2]

Srong Tsan was succeeded by his son Srong-tsan Gampo.[3] He was a remarkable figure. He married a princess of Nepal and also won, under military pressure, the hands of the daughter of the Chinese emperor. Through the influence of his queens he was converted into Buddhism and introduced the religion in his country. The grateful posterity regards him as an incarnation of Bodhisatva Padmapāṇi. He revised Tibetan alphabet on the model of the Indian, invited Indian Paṇḍits to Tibet, and had Buddhist scriptures translated into Tibetan. He founded numerous monasteries and castles at Lhasa and made that his capital. He also extended the suzerainty of Tibet in all directions.

[1] Lévi-*Nepal*. II. 147, 153-4.

[2] Lévi's view has been refuted by K. P. Jayaswal (*JBORS*. XXII. 172). Some other views on the origin of Bengali *San* have been summarised by D. Triveda in *JIH*. XIX. 292 ff.

[3] The account of Srong-tsan Gampo is based on the following authorities:

a. *The Chronicles of Ladakh* (translated by Francke in *Antiquities of Tibet*, Part II, pp. 82-84).
b. *A Study on the Chronicles of Ladakh* by Dr. L. Petech (published as a supplement to *IHQ*. XV), Ch. V.
c. Lévi-*Nepal*. II. 148-152.
d. Sarat Chandra Das's account [*JASB*. L. (1881), Part I, pp. 218-224]. (This is somewhat antiquated and should be read in the light of Nos. *a-c*).
e. L. A. Waddell, *The Buddhism of Tibet*, Ch. III.

Srong-tsan Gampo was a contemporary of the great Indian emperor Harshavardhana. The death of Harsha, towards the close of 646 or the beginning of 647 A.D., was followed by anarchy and confusion, and the succession to the imperial throne was claimed by one of his ministers, who evidently held sway in Bihar and whose name is given in Chinese texts as Na-fū-ti O-lo-na-shuen, the original Indian name being perhaps Arjuna or Aruṇāśva of Tīrabhukti (Tirhut, North Bihar). According to the story preserved in the Chinese annals, this Arjuna attacked a Chinese mission, under Wang-hiuen-tse, that was sent by the Chinese Emperor to Harsha. For reasons, not explained, Arjuna killed most of the members of the mission and plundered their property. Wang-hiuen-tse fled to Nepal, secured 7,000 soldiers from Nepal and 1,200 from Tibet, and, returning to Indian plains, disastrously defeated and imprisoned Arjuna and took him a captive to China. It is said that Wang-hiuen-tse stormed the capital city of Arjuna, and about 580 walled towns in India submitted to him. Even Bhāskaravarman, the king of Kāmarūpa, sent supplies to the victorious army led by Wang-hiuen-tse.[1] The whole episode took place during 647 and 648 A.D. in the plains of Bihar, probably to the north of the river Ganges and not far from the river Gaṇḍakī.

The story reads more like romance than sober history, and it is difficult to say what amount of historical truth there is in it. For it is as difficult to accept the story of unprovoked hostility on the part of Arjuna as to believe in the utter rout of his army and thorough conquest of his country by 8,000 soldiers.

There is, however, no doubt that the Tibetan king Srong-tsan Gampo was drawn into Indian politics, either in connection with the strange episode of Wang-hiuen-tse or in pursuance of his father's policy. Whether he actually conquered any part of Indian plains is not definitely known, but he is said to have conquered Assam and Nepal, and exercised suzerainty over half of Jambudvīpa.[2] There is hardly any doubt that Nepal was at this time a vassal state of Tibet and remained so for nearly two hundred years.

The reign-period of Srong-tsan Gampo is not definitely known, but there is general agreement among scholars that he died about 650 A.D.[3] He was succeeded by his grandson Ki-li-pa-pu (650-679)

[1] *JA.* 9e Serie, t. xv. (1900), pp. 297 ff. It appears that the mission of Wang-hiuen-tse was sent to Magadha and presumably the incidents took place there. The Chinese form of the name of the Indian king may mean O-lo-na-shun, king of Ti-na-fu-ti (p. 300, f.n. 2). The latter may stand for Tīrabhukti (North Bihar).

[2] Lévi–*Nepal.* II. 148.

[3] Tibetan historians give various dates for the birth of Srong-tsan Gampo, ranging between 600 and 617 A.D. (*JASB.* L. 218). According to Dr. Petech, "it

who proved an extremely capable ruler. He inflicted a crushing defeat upon China in 670 A.D. and conquered Kashgar and the neighbouring regions in the North. In the South he is said to have extended his conquests as far as Central India,[1] but unfortunately no localities are specified.

In 702 Nepal and Central India revolted against Tibet. Nepal was subdued, and Central India, even if it did not send regular tribute, did not remain free from depredations. For, during the period 713-41 an embassy from Central India came to China to seek for help against the Tibetans and the Arabs.[2]

Lalitāditya Muktāpīḍa, the powerful king of Kashmir, was also engaged in hostilities against Tibet and sent an embassy to China between 736 and 747 A.D. He represented to the Imperial court, that in conjunction with the king of Central India he had closed the five roads leading from Tibet to India and obtained several victories against the Tibetans.[3] After Lalitāditya the task of keeping the Tibetans in check fell upon the Pāla kings of Bengal, and further account of the relations between Tibet and India will be given in Chapter VI.

is established with certainty that Srong-tsan Gampo was born in 569 A.D. and reigned from 620 to 650 A.D." (*op. cit.*, pp. 47-48). Lévi (*Nepal*, II. 173) and Thomas (*Literary Texts*, 49) also place the king's death at 650, the latter assigning him the date 600-650 A.D. Francke notes that the Chinese date for the king is 600-650 A.D. (*op. cit.*).

[1] Lévi–*Nepal*. II. 174. I do not know the authority for Sir R. C. Temple's assertion that "at this period Tibetan rule must have spread southwards far into Bengal" (*IA*. 1916, p. 39).

[2] Lévi–*Nepal*. II. 174-75.

[3] *Ibid*. 175.

APPENDIX II

THE EVIDENCE OF GAUḌA-VAHO

Dr. S. P. Paṇḍit, the learned editor of *Gauḍa-vaho*, has assumed without any discussion that the Lord of Magadha mentioned in that poem was identical with the king of Gauḍa.[1]

This assumption, though supported by Haripāla's commentary on *Gauḍa-vaho*,[2] rests only on evidence of a very indirect character. The principal argument, of course, is that unless the identity is assumed there remains no justification for the title of the book. But the learned editor himself admits that even such an assumption does not go very far in supporting or explaining the title. Thus he was constrained to remark as follows:

> "But this mention of the Magadha king is made in the most incidental manner and with no direct purpose to refer to him as the hero who has given the name to the poem."[3]

Another argument is supplied by internal evidence. After singing Yaśovarman's exploits the poet gives some personal accounts. We are told that one evening the poet was requested by an assembly of learned people to describe fully the manner in which Yaśovarman slew the lord of Magadha (v. 844). In reply the poet said, after describing in general terms the greatness of Yaśovarman in 228 verses, that he would sing next morning the *Gauḍa-vaho*, describing the destruction of many (or one) eastern kings. Next morning when the poet was going to relate the exploits of Yaśovarman to the learned assembly, the poets of the court talked among themselves about Yaśovarman's virtues and his prowess that had accomplished the death (*lit.* cut the throat) of the Gauḍa king (v. 1194). (This passing reference is the only allusion to the death of the Gauḍa king in the whole poem). The poet then began: "Hear the wonderful deeds of Yaśovarman." But here the poem ends.

Now it may be argued that as *Gauḍa-vaho* was sung in response to the request to describe how Yaśovarman slew the lord of Magadha, the king of Magadha was the same as Lord of Gauḍa. It is, however, not quite inconceivable that the poet, in compliance with the request, proposed to give an account not only of the king of Magadha, but also of the various eastern kings,

[1] *GV.* xxiv., xlii. [2] Cf. commentary on v. 844. [3] *GV.* xliii.

including that of Gauḍa. It is evident from the abrupt end that he actually accomplished neither, and even if he did so, his work has not come down to us. This is also the view of the learned editor of *Gauḍa-vaho*.[1]

On the whole, the union of Gauḍa and Magadha under one ruler may be a valid presumption but cannot be regarded as a proved fact, on the strength of *Gauḍa-vaho*. Further, it is legitimate to infer that even if both Magadha and Gauḍa were under the same ruler, it was the ruler of Gauḍa who had Magadha under his sway, rather than *vice-versa*. For, otherwise there is no justification for the name *Gauḍa-vaho*.[2]

[1] *GV*. XLVIII. For a summary of the various opinions expressed by scholars on this subject cf. Supplementary Notes (pp. ccxxxix-cclv) by Utgikar in the second edition of *Gauḍa-vaho*, published by Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (Poona, 1927).

[2] According to N. B. Utgikar, "the reason for the selection of the name of the Gauḍa king in preference to other kings subjugated by Yaśovarman, to form the designation of a highly-pitched poem, may possibly have to be sought for in the latent ill-will that can historically be proved to have existed between the two kingdoms of Kanauj and Gauḍa before the time of Yaśovarman" (2nd ed., p. cclii). This explanation is, however, hardly convincing.

CHAPTER VI

THE PĀLAS

THE foundation of the Pāla dynasty about the middle of the eighth century A.D. marks a new epoch in the history of Bengal. For the first time the historian has the advantage of being able to follow, in the main, the fortunes of a single ruling dynasty, the order of succession of whose long line of kings is precisely known, and whose chronology may be fixed with a tolerable degree of certainty. This advantage does not forsake him till the end of the Hindu period, in spite of occasional political disintegration and the rise of local dynasties ruling in various parts of the province.

The history of the Pālas, extending over four centuries, may be divided into the following stages:

I. The Origin and Early History of the Pālas.
II. The Pāla Empire.
III. The Decline and Fall of the Empire.
IV. Restoration.
V. The Break-up of the Pāla Kingdom.
VI. Disintegration and Temporary Revival.
VII. The End of the Pāla Rule.

I. THE ORIGIN AND EARLY HISTORY OF THE PĀLAS

The anarchy and confusion which prevailed in Bengal for more than a century[1] led to a natural reaction. The people, who had suffered untold miseries for a long period, suddenly developed a political wisdom and a spirit of self-sacrifice to which there is no recorded parallel in the history of Bengal. They perceived that the establishment of a single strong central authority offered the only effective remedy against political disintegration within and invasions from abroad to which their unhappy land was so long a victim. They also realised that such a happy state of things could only be brought about by the voluntary surrender of authority to one person by the numerous petty chiefs who had been exercising independent political authority in different parts of the country. The ideal of subordinating individual interests to a national cause was not as

[1] See *supra* pp. 77-90.

common in India in the eighth century A.D. as it was in Europe a thousand years later. Our admiration is, therefore, all the greater, that without any struggle the independent political chiefs recognised the suzerainty of a popular hero named Gopāla. Thus took place a bloodless revolution which both in its spirit and subsequent results reminds us of what happened in Japan about A.D. 1870.

Unfortunately this memorable episode in the history of Bengal is known to us only in brief outline, and details are altogether lacking. The Khalimpur copper-plate[1] issued in the 32nd year of the reign of Dharmapāla, refers to this event in the following couplet :

mātsyanyāyam=apohituṁ prakṛitibhir=lakshmyāḥ karaṁ grāhitaḥ|
śrī-Gopāla=iti kshitīśa-śirasāṁ chūḍāmaṇis=tat-sutaḥ||

Kielhorn translates the above as follows :

"His son was the crest-jewel of the heads of kings, the glorious Gopāla, whom the people made take the hand of Fortune, to put an end to the practice of fishes."

In a footnote to the above, Kielhorn adds : "Gopāla was made king by the people to put an end to a lawless state of things in which everyone was the prey of his neighbour." He also cites authority for his interpretation of the phrase '*mātsya-nyāya.*'

Now there is no dispute regarding the general interpretation of the above passage, *viz.*, that Gopāla was made king in order to put an end to the state of anarchy which prevailed in Bengal. The only point that is open to discussion is the agency that made him king. According to the couplet referred to above, Gopāla was made king by the '*prakṛitis.*' The common meaning of the word is 'subjects,' and it has consequently been held that Gopāla was elected king by the general body of people.[2] Although this view has met with general acceptance, it is open to doubt whether the passage refers to anything like a regular election by the general mass of people, and, if so, whether this was at all practicable in those days and in such abnormal times. It would, perhaps, be more reasonable to hold that the choice was originally made by the leading chiefs, and was subsequently endorsed and acclaimed by the people. This may well be regarded as tantamount to an 'election by the people' referred to in the Khalimpur copper-plate.

It has been suggested on the other hand that '*prakṛiti*' should be taken as a technical term meaning principal officers, and that

[1] Ins. No. 2 (see list of inscriptions, App. I to this chapter).
[2] *BI.* 151, 162, 171 ; *GR.* 21 ; *GL.* 19 f.n.

Gopāla was placed on the throne by the principal officers of the state.[1] This view is supported by an instance recorded in the *Rājataraṅgiṇī*, *viz.*, the election of Jalauka as king by a group of seven officials called '*prakritis*.' It must be remembered, however, that such election is possible, and even very probable, only when there is a strong and stable government exercising authority over the whole kingdom. In the absence of such a central government, we can hardly think of ministers or a set of permanent officials who could offer the throne to a nominee of their own. If we presume, as we must, that a central political authority exercising any sort of control over the whole of Gauḍa or Vaṅga had ceased to function for a long period, and the country was divided into a large number of independent principalities, we can scarcely think of a group of officials (presumably of one of these states) placing somebody on the throne of Bengal, or a considerable portion of the province.

On the whole, therefore, we are justified in holding the view that Gopāla was called to the throne by the voice of the people, though perhaps the selection was originally made by a group of leaders or independent ruling chiefs.

Although this remarkable episode has not been referred to in Indian literature, and its very memory has now vanished from Bengal, it was a living tradition among the people even so late as the sixteenth century A.D. This is proved by the curious story recorded by the Tibetan historian Lāmā Tāranātha.[2]

Unfortunately we possess very meagre information about the life and reign of Gopāla. His father Vapyaṭa and grandfather Dayitavishṇu are referred to in very general terms in the official records, and there is nothing to indicate that they were ruling chiefs. Vapyaṭa is called 'destructor of foes,' but this does not imply anything more than that he was, perhaps, a military chief.[3]

In a commentary to *Ashṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* composed by Haribhadra, during the reign of Gopāla's son Dharmapāla, the latter is described as *Rājabhaṭādi-vaṁśa-patita*.[4] This led MM. Haraprasād Śāstrī to conclude that Dharmapāla belonged "to the family of a military officer of some king."[5] Others have taken

[1] *EHBP.* 112. [2] Cf. App. III to this chapter.

[3] Mr. J. C. Ghosh's view that Vapyaṭa was the first king of the line rests on very insufficient grounds [*IHQ.* VII. 751 (831); IX. 481].

[4] *rājye Rājabhaṭ-ādi-vaṁśa-patita-śrī-Dharmapālasya vai|*
tattvāloka-vidhāyinī virachitā sat-pañjik=eyaṁ mayā||

The verse, occurring at the end of ch. 32 of the commentary, is quoted and an account of the MS. is given in *BI.* 164, f.n. 4.

[5] *RC.'* 6. R. D. Banerji misquoted this passage and by reading 'the same' for 'some' attributed to MM. Śāstrī the view that the Pālas were descended from a general of Rājabhaṭa (*BI.* 164. f.n. 4). MM. Śāstrī, far from holding this view,

Rājabhaṭa as a personal name, and identified him with the king of the same name ruling in Samataṭa when Sheng-chi came to India towards the close of the seventh century A.D.[1] This Rājabhaṭa may be identified with the heir-apparent of Devakhaḍga named in official records of the dynasty as Rājarāja and Rājarāja-Bhaṭa.[2] The passage cited by MM. Haraprasād Śāstrī would thus lead to the conclusion that the Pālas were connected in some way with the Khaḍgas. The fact that the Khaḍgas were Buddhists, like the Pālas, and were ruling in Eastern Bengal, shortly before the accession of Gopāla, undoubtedly strengthens this presumption. On the other hand, apart from the questionable interpretation of Rājabhaṭa as a personal name, the word '*patita*' creates considerable difficulty. There is no warrant for the assumption that it means 'descended by the female line.'[3] It is normally used in a derogatory sense such as 'fallen,' 'outcast,' *etc.*, and scarcely ever in the sense of 'being descended from,' though the latter meaning is not altogether unknown.[4]

Some scholars have traced a subtle reference to the royal family of Dharmapāla's mother in the fifth verse of the Khalimpur copper-plate (Ins. No. 2). In this verse Deddadevī, the wife of Gopāla, is compared to the wives of the deities Moon, Agni (Fire), Śiva, Kuvera, Indra, and Vishṇu.[5] In course of the comparison, the word '*Bhadrātmajā*' is used immediately after Bhadrā, the name of Kuvera's wife. Kielhorn, while translating this verse, took '*Bhadrātmajā*' as an epithet qualifying Deddadevī, and translated it as 'a daughter of the Bhadra king,' regarding Bhadra as a tribal or family name. Mr. Akshaya Kumar Maitreya, on the other hand, took '*Bhadrātmajā*' as an ordinary adjective to Bhadrā, meaning daughter of a gentleman. It must be confessed, however, that there is hardly any point in applying such a colourless epithet to Bhadrā alone of all the goddesses mentioned in the verse. Kielhorn, therefore, may be right in his interpretation, and Deddadevī might belong to the royal Bhadra family referred to in the last chapter.[6]

suggested (*op. cit.*) that Dayita-Vishṇu, the grandfather of Gopāla, belonged to the family of Mātṛi-Vishṇu mentioned in the Eran Stone Ins. (Fleet. *CII.* III. No. 19).

[1] *VJI.* 147. See *supra* p. 87.

[2] *JASB.* N.S. XIX. 378. R. D. Banerji rejects this view (*BI.* 165-66), but it is accepted by R. G. Basak (*HNI.* 207). Mr. J. C. Ghosh identifies Rājabhaṭa with Vapyaṭa, the father of Gopāla (*IHQ.* IX. 481). This seems to be very unlikely.

[3] *IHQ.* VII. 533.

[4] Cf. *avaṁśa-patito rājā* (*Chāṇakya-śataka*, 81).

[5] For a similar comparison cf. *Mbh. Ādi-P.* ch. 199, vv. 5-6.

[6] See *supra* p. 86.

It would thus appear that we have hardly any definite information regarding the origin of the royal Pāla family. Strangely enough, unlike other mediaeval records, we do not find any mythical pedigree of the dynasty in the Pāla inscriptions. In the Kamauli Plate of Vaidyadeva (Ins. No. 50), who was originally the minister of a Pāla king, Vigrahapāla III is said to have belonged to the solar dynasty.[1] According to the commentary of Sandhyākara Nandī's *Rāmacharita* (I. 4), Dharmapāla was 'the light of Samudra's race' (*samudra-kula-dīpa*) *i.e.*, descended from the ocean.[2] It may be noted that both the records belong to the very end of the Pāla period, more than three hundred and fifty years after the accession of Gopāla, and naturally very little weight attaches to the theories contained in them about the origin of the dynasty. Besides, the membership of the solar or lunar family was commonly claimed for most of the royal houses of those days, and there is nothing distinctive about it. The descent from the *samudra* or ocean has undoubtedly more novelty in it. A distant echo of this may be traced in an old Bengali text called *Dharma-maṅgala* composed by Ghanarāma.[3] It records that Dharmapāla had no son and his queen Vallabhadevī was banished to a forest. There she had a liaison with the ocean and a son was born to her. This silly story gives a wrong name for Dharmapāla's queen, and describes him as a devout Vaishṇava and devoted to the Brāhmaṇas.

Tāranātha tells us that Gopāla was succeeded by a son whom Nāgarāja Sagarapāla, the sovereign of the ocean, begot on his younger queen.[4] This is evidently another version of the origin of the Pālas from *samudra* or ocean. These stories are too silly to be seriously considered,[5] and do not help us in the least in tracing the ancestry of the Pālas. An attempt has been made to reconcile the two different traditions of *samudra* and *sūrya* origin by holding that *samudra-kula* means *sūrya-kula* or solar race to which Samudra, the son of the mythical king Sagara, belonged.[6]

[1] This tradition is also recorded in *Pag Sam Jon Zang*, cf. *JASB*. 1898. p. 20. In a *champū-kavya*, called *Udayasundarī-kathā*, composed by Soḍḍhala, a poet of Gujarat in the eleventh century A.D., and published in the Gaekwad Oriental Series. Dharmapāla is said to have belonged to the family of Māndhātā (p. 4). As Māndhātā is a well-known mythical king of the solar race, this reference supports the view that the Pālas belonged to the solar race.

[2] *RC.*[2] p. IX.

[3] Quoted in *BI*. 168, f.n. 18.

[4] *Tar.*, pp. 208-9. According to Tāranātha, this successor was Devapāla, but according to Buston (*History of Buddhism*, translated by Dr. E. Obermiller, Heidelberg 1932, p. 156), he was Dharmapāla.

[5] Mr. R. D. Banerji tries to give a rational interpretation of '*Samudra-kula*' by the theory that the Pālas came from the sea (*PB*. 46).

[6] This view, originally propounded by Mr. Prabhaschandra Sen, has been restated at some length by Mr. J. C. Ghosh (*IHQ*. IX. 484-85).

As to the caste of the Pālas, the commentary on a verse of *Rāmacharita* (I. 17) distinctly says that Rāmapāla was born of a Kshatriya king. Tāranātha tells us that Gopāla was begotten on a Kshatriya woman by the Tree-God.[1] It may be readily believed, therefore, that the Pālas, like most of the ruling families in mediaeval India, were regarded as Kshatriyas. This view is corroborated by the matrimonial relations of the Pālas with the Rāshṭrakūṭas and the Kalachuris. But according to that curious work *Mañjuśrī-mūlakalpa,* which refers to kings only by the first letter of the name, kings, who have been identified with the Pālas, are said to be of the menial caste.[2] Abu'l-Fazl calls the Pālas Kāyasthas.[3] But the value of the last two evidences is not very great, and they need not be seriously considered.

Perhaps one of the reasons why no reference to the origin and caste of the Pālas occurs in their own records is the fact that they were Buddhists and did not care so much to adopt Brahmanical institutions or traditions. The copper-plates of the Pālas begin with an invocation to Lord Buddha, and many kings of the dynasty are known to have been great patrons of Buddhism. According to the Tibetan tradition,[4] Gopāla founded a Vihāra or monastery at Nālandā and established many religious schools. Tāranātha, as usual, gives a long list of Buddhist teachers who flourished during this reign. Whether Gopāla himself first adopted Buddhism, or whether he was born in a Buddhist family, it is not possible to determine. But certain it is that the successors of Gopāla were all ardent followers of Buddhism, and for nearly four hundred years their court proved to be the last stronghold of that dying faith in India. For this reason the Pāla kings enjoyed an important position in the international Buddhist world, and they maintained intact the fountain-head of later Buddhism from which streams flowed to Tibet in the north and the Indian archipelago in the south and east.

As in the case of the origin of the family, uncertainty also hangs over the location of the original kingdom of Gopāla. The inscriptions do not supply any definite information on the point. The fact that during the first two hundred years of the Pāla rule, covering the reigns of eight kings, almost all the copper-plate grants were issued from victorious camps in Magadha and all the other inscriptions, with only a single exception, belonged to that region, naturally led many to conclude that the Pālas originally ruled in

[1] *Tar.*, p. 202.

[2] *Tataḥ pareṇa bhūpālā gopālā dāsajīvinah, MMK (J)*, v. 883. Mr. Jayaswal takes Gopāla in this verse as referring to the Pāla dynasty. This is very doubtful, specially as Buddha's doctrine is said to have been lost during their reign (*IHI.* 72).

[3] *Ain. Transl.* II. 145.

[4] *Tar.*, 204; Buston. 156.

Magadha and subsequently conquered Bengal. But this view can hardly be maintained in the light of positive evidences which have come to light in recent years.

In the first place, the *Rāmacharita* definitely refers to Varendrī as the '*janakabhūḥ*' or ancestral home of the Pālas. Secondly, the Gwalior inscription refers to the adversary of Nāgabhaṭa, who can hardly be anybody other than Dharmapāla, as *Vaṅgapati.* These two evidences make it almost certain that the home and the original kingdom of the Pālas must be placed in Bengal. This is indirectly supported by the Bādāl Pillar inscription which says that Dharmapāla, to begin with, was only the ruler of the east, and gradually spread his dominions in other directions.

We should, of course, remember that Varendra (also called Varendrī) denoted the northern, and Vaṅga, the eastern and south-eastern part of Bengal. The evidences of *Rāmacharita* and Gwalior inscription might, therefore, appear to be contradictory, unless we regard Vaṅga as denoting the whole province of Bengal. Such an use of the name Vaṅga can, however, be justified or explained only on the supposition that the Pālas were originally the rulers of Vaṅga, and the name came to be applied to the rest of the province with the growth of their dominions. The conflicting nature of the two evidences, therefore, still remains. Perhaps Tāranātha's account supplies the best solution of the difficulty, *viz.*, that Gopāla was born of a Kshatriya family near Puṇḍravardhana, but was subsequently elected ruler of Bhaṅgala, undoubtedly a corrupt form of Vaṅga or Vaṅgāla.[1]

But whatever may have been the limits of the original kingdom of Gopāla,[2] it is reasonable to hold that he consolidated his authority over the whole of Bengal. In the Monghyr copper-plate of Devapāla (Ins. No. 6), Gopāla is said to have conquered the earth as far as the sea. This, of course, does not mean much. But it is difficult to believe that his son and successor Dharmapāla could carry on victorious campaigns up to the Punjab, unless he had inherited from his father at least the consolidated kingdom of Bengal.

From the time of Nārāyaṇapāla onwards the copper-plate grants of the Pāla kings begin with a verse which is an eulogy both of Buddha and Gopāla. Naturally all the epithets are equally applicable to both of them. One of these runs as follows:

jitvā yaḥ kāmak-āri-prabhavam=abhibhavaṁ śāśvatīm-prāpa śāntiṁ

[1] For fuller discussion see App. III to this chapter.

[2] R. D. Banerji held that Gopāla was elected ruler of Gauḍa, Vaṅga, and Magadha (*BI.* 162), but no evidence is cited.

In the case of Gopāla, the passage seems to mean that he established peace in his kingdom by having defeated the attacks of the oppressors or tyrants, the expression '*kāmakārī*' meaning those who do not acknowledge any control and act wilfully. The reference in this case is, of course, to the period of anarchy and political disintegration that prevailed before the accession of Gopāla. It has been suggested, however, that '*Kāmakāri*' means 'king of Kāmarūpa, who is an enemy,' *Kāma,* with the pleonastic suffix *ka,* standing for Kāmarūpa, under the well-known Sanskrit aphorism that part of a name may be substituted for the full name.[1] It is unreasonable to rule out the interpretation altogether, but it is to be seriously considered whether such an achievement of Gopāla, as the conquest of Assam, or of Magadha (as noted by Tāranātha), would not have been more directly stated in the official records, if it were a fact. Besides, as we shall see (*infra* p. 117), Kāmarūpa was conquered in the time of Devapāla.

On the whole, therefore, it would be safe to conclude that the main achievement of Gopāla was the establishment of durable peace in Bengal by bringing under control the turbulent elements in the province. That the reign of Gopāla ended in peaceful pursuits and not adventurous military expeditions is also hinted at in verse 3[2] of the Monghyr copper-plate of Devapāla (Ins. No. 6).

The reign-period of Gopāla is not definitely known. According to Tāranātha, he ruled for forty-five years,[3] but this statement cannot be accepted without corroboration. According to *Mañjuśrī-mūlakalpa,*[4] his reign-period was twenty-seven years. His accession to the throne may be placed with a tolerable degree of certainty within a decade of 750 A.D., and he probably ceased to rule about 770 A.D.[5] The fact that he was called to the throne at a critical moment shows that he must have been fairly advanced in age, and given proof of his prowess and ability. It is not likely, therefore, that he ruled for a very long time. According to *Mañjuśrī-mūlakalpa,* he died at the advanced age of eighty.[6] This is hardly likely, as we know that his son and grandson ruled respectively for at least thirty-two and thirty-five years.

[1] *IHQ.* VII. 531-32.

[2] 'Having conquered the earth as far as the sea, he released the war-elephants, as they were no longer required.'

[3] *Tar.*, p. 204.

[4] *MMK(J).* v. 690.

[5] The dates of the Pāla kings have been discussed separately in App. II to this chapter.

[6] *MMK(J).* v. 690.

II. THE PĀLA EMPIRE

1. *Dharmapāla (c. 770–810 A.D.)*

Gopāla was succeeded in *c.* 770 A.D. by his son Dharmapāla, who was destined to raise the Pāla kingdom to the high-water mark of glory and power. But before we describe his life and reign, it is necessary to pass in rapid review the political condition of India at the time.

In the Deccan, the Rāshṭrakūṭas had wrested the political power from the Chālukyas, and established themselves as the ruling dynasty in 753 A.D., *i.e.*, about the time when Gopāla ascended the throne. Two powerful rulers of this dynasty, Dhruva (*c.* 780-794) and his son Govinda III (*c.* 794-814), sent strong military expeditions to extend their powers in Northern India, and brilliant, though temporary, successes attended their efforts.[1]

Their chief adversaries in the north were the Pratīhāras. It is not necessary for our present purpose to enter into the controversial details about the early history of the dynasty. It will suffice to say that Vatsarāja, an early ruler of this dynasty, and one of whose known dates is 783-84 A.D., was a powerful king who not only consolidated his power in Mālava and Rājputāna, but also tried to extend his conquests to Eastern India.[2] In particular, he defeated the lord of Gauḍa. His success was, however, short-lived. He was defeated by the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Dhruva who completed his triumph by defeating the lord of Gauḍa in the Ganges-Jumna Doab.

It would thus appear that shortly after his accession to the throne, Dharmapāla was involved in a tripartite struggle between the three chief ruling powers of India. It is difficult to follow the exact course of this struggle in strict chronological order, as the few isolated facts, known to us from the inscriptions of the three dynasties, are capable of different interpretations. We can only trace what seems to be the most probable trend of events in the light of all available materials.

The fight between the Gauḍas and the Pratīhāras was the natural consequence of the imperial designs of both these powers. Dharmapāla inherited a consolidated and powerful kingdom and began to expand his dominions towards the west, where the political situation was admirably suited to his ambition. With the passing away of Yaśovarman and Lalitāditya, no great power or

[1] For the history of the Rāshṭrakūṭas, cf. *RA*.
[2] For the history of the Pratīhāras, cf. *GP*; *TK*. Chs. x-xi.

political personality arose in Northern India, and for nearly half a century it offered a most tempting field to every ambitious political adventurer. Dharmapāla seized the opportunity and rapidly pushed his conquests towards the west. Unluckily for him, Vatsarāja, the king of the Pratīhāras, also felt the same urge of imperial ambitions and utilised the same opportunity by pushing his conquests towards the north and east. In the light of subsequent events, one might safely conclude that the possession of the imperial city of Kanauj was the common objective of both, and the contending parties probably came into clash somewhere in the Doab.[1] Dharmapāla was defeated in this encounter, and the effect of this reverse might have been serious, but for the providential intervention of the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Dhruva who inflicted a disastrous defeat upon Vatsarāja.

After defeating Vatsarāja, Dhruva evidently marched through his dominions right up to the Doab. Here he met Dharmapāla[2] and defeated him. But this was not evidently a lasting victory with any serious consequence to Dharmapāla. Dhruva was too far away from his base to follow up his victory, and there were probably other causes to induce him to turn back. In any case, he shortly returned to the Deccan.[3]

[1] The Pratīhāra king Vatsarāja is said to have "appropriated with ease the fortune of royalty of the Gauḍa" (*IA*. XI. 157; *EI*. VI. 248). This does not necessarily mean, as has been suggested (*BI*. 148), that Vatsarāja advanced as far as Gauḍa, far less that he actually occupied both Gauḍa and Vaṅga. For all we know, the encounter of the lord of Gauḍa with Vatsarāja, like that with Dhruva, might have taken place in the Doab or its neighbourhood, in a territory far from the borders of Bengal. This is more probable as we have no evidence of any extensive territorial conquests of Vatsarāja such as would be implied in a triumphal march from Malwa up to the heart of Bengal. No special importance need be attached to the statement that he took away Gauḍa's umbrellas of state, for the same claim is made by Dhruva, though in this case we know definitely that the encounter took place in the Doab, far away from Bengal (*GP*. 34-35). A verse in *Pṛithvīrāja-vijaya* says that the sword of the Chāhamāna king Durlabharāja purified itself by a dip at the confluence of the Ganges and the sea, and by the taste of the land of Gauḍa. As Durlabharāja's son was a feudatory of Nāgabhaṭa, it has been suggested that Durlabharāja was a feudatory of Vatsarāja and accompanied him in his expedition to Bengal (*IHQ*. XIV. 844-45). It is, however, not very safe to form such important conclusions on stray verses composed about four centuries after the events described.

[2] As the encounter between Dhruva and the lord of Gauḍa took place in the Gangetic Doab, the latter must have extended his conquests beyond Allahabad in the west. This circumstance and the fact that the fight must have taken place some time after 780 A.D. leave no doubt that the lord of Gauḍa was Dharmapāla, and not his predecessor.

[3] *RA*. 58.

In spite of his reverses, Dharmapāla derived the greatest benefit from Dhruva's campaign. His mighty opponent Vatsarāja was a 'fugitive in the trackless desert,' while his (Vatsarāja's) dominions were trampled under feet by the victorious Karṇāṭa army. For some time to come Dharmapāla had no more fear of opposition from that quarter. So he continued his victorious campaign, and, emboldened by success, advanced to the furthest limits of Northern India.

The full account of this wonderful military campaign is not known, but a few important details have been preserved in the Pāla records. According to v. 3 of the Bhagalpur copper-plate of Nārāyaṇapāla (No. 14), Dharmapāla acquired the sovereignty of Mahodaya (*i.e.* Kanauj) by having defeated Indrarāja[1] and other enemies, and then conferred it upon Chakrāyudha.

That Dharmapāla proceeded far beyond Kanauj in course of his military campaigns is proved by v. 7 of the Monghyr copper-plate (No. 6). It tells us that in course of the victorious campaigns of Dharmapāla, his attendants performed religious rites at Kedāra, Gokarṇa, the confluence of the Ganges and the sea, and various other holy places. Kedāra is undoubtedly the famous place of pilgrimage on the Himālayas in Gharwal, and although Gokarṇa cannot be definitely identified,[2] the verse leaves no doubt that

[1] It has been generally taken for granted that this Indrarāja is no other than Indrāyudha, mentioned in the Jaina *Harivaṁśa* of Jinasena as having ruled in the north in the year 783-84 A.D. It is, however, more probable that Indrarāja was the brother of the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Dhruva whom he had left in charge of Lāṭeśvara-*maṇḍala*, which presumably represented Gujarat and other Rāshṭrakūṭa possessions in the north (*GP.* 37, f.n. 2). In that case the defeat of Indrarāja was a further episode in the Rāshṭrakūṭa-Gauḍa rivalry by which Dharmapāla not only avenged his former defeat by Dhruva, but also cleared the way for his further conquests by eliminating the only power that stood between him and the empire. As to Indrāyudha, we do not know anything beyond what has been stated in *Harivaṁśa*, not even whether he was king of Kanauj, or related in any way to Chakrāyudha who was placed on the throne of Kanauj by Dharmapāla as his protégé and vassal.

[2] Kielhorn identified Gokarṇa with a place of that name in the North Kanara district of the Bombay Presidency which is even now a place of pilgrimage frequented by Hindu devotees from all parts of India (*IA.* 1892, p. 257, f.n. 56). This identification implies a victorious march of Dharmapāla across the Bombay Presidency, right through the dominions of the powerful Rāshṭrakūṭas, and it is difficult to accept it without more positive evidence. A more probable identification is that with Gokarṇa in Nepal, on the bank of the Bagmati, about two miles above and north-east of Paśupati. This identification is strengthened by the tradition preserved in the *Svayambhu Purāṇa*, that Dharmapāla, ruler of Gauḍa, occupied the throne of Nepāla. Curiously enough, the same *Svayambhu Purāṇa*

Dharmapāla practically overran the greater part of Northern India.

In the light of the above facts, we can understand the full significance of verse 12 of the Khalimpur copper-plate of Dharmapāla.[1] It describes how Dharmapāla installed the king of Kanyakubja in the presence of the chiefs of Bhoja, Matsya, Madra, Kuru, Yadu, Yavana, Avanti, Gandhāra, and Kīra, who uttered acclamations of approval, bowing down respectfully with their diadems trembling. There can be hardly any doubt that the king of Kanyakubja referred to in this passage was Chakrāyudha. It would appear that at the conclusion of his victorious campaign, Dharmapāla held an imperial assembly or *Durbar* at Kanauj whose sovereignty he had acquired by his own prowess. The *Durbar* was attended by the vassal chiefs named above, who all witnessed the installation of Chakrāyudha by Dharmapāla as his vassal chief of Kanauj.

This famous scene represents the culmination of Dharmapāla's triumph, and testifies to the formal assumption by him of the position of suzerain of Northern India which he had earned by defeating various kings. The categorical statement that the chiefs of various states assembled in Kanauj, and bowed their heads in

refers to Gaṅgāsāgara and places it in or near Kapilavastu. It has been plausibly suggested that Gokarṇa and '*Gaṅgāsametāmbudhi*' of the Monghyr copper-plate refer to the two places in Nepal, and that verse 7 of Monghyr copper-plate refers to a campaign of Dharmapāla along the foot of the Himālays (*IC.* IV. 266). In support of this it may be pointed out that the confluence of the Ganges and the sea was situated in Bengal itself, and it was too near home to deserve special mention, either as a place of pilgrimage visited by the followers of Dharmapāla, or as a landmark in his victorious campaign. On the whole, it would be better, in the present state of our knowledge, to regard Gokarṇa as situated in Nepal, and leave the other question undecided.

It may be mentioned here that a place named Gokarṇa with a temple is referred to in an inscription in the Pudukottai State (*Economic Conditions in Southern India* by A. Appadorai, Vol. I, p. 21). In the light of what has been said later about the military campaigns of Devapāla in the South Indian peninsula, the location of Gokarṇa, conquered by Dharmapāla, in the Pudukottai State is worth consideration.

[1] Although the general purport and implication of this verse are clear, its exact meaning is somewhat obscure on account of the defective construction of the last line. The emendation of "*dattaḥ śrī-kanyakubjas-*" into "*dattaśrīḥ kanyakubjas-*" (*GL.* 14, f.n. 12) would give the meaning suggested in the text. The expression '*svā-bhishek-odakumbhah,*' however, implies that Dharmapāla's own coronation (as emperor) also probably took place before Chakrāyudha was placed on the throne of Kanyakubja. Kielhorn suggests in a footnote that the word '*dattaḥ*' in the verse, as it stands, "indicates that Dharmapāla had been requested to permit the installation of the king of Kanyakubja" (*EI.* IV. 252, f.n. 3).

approval of the coronation ceremony held by the command of Dharmapāla, leaves no doubt that they all acknowledged his suzerainty, though it is conceivable that some of them might have offered homage and submission even though they were not actually defeated in battle. It would indeed be fantastic to suppose that although they were all independent chiefs, in no way subordinate to Dharmapāla, they had come all the way to Kanauj only to approve of the settlement of political affairs in that city 'by way of diplomatic gesture.'[1] The expression '*praṇati-pariṇataiḥ*' hardly leaves any doubt about their status *vis a vis* Dharmapāla

Fortunately, we have got an independent positive evidence in support of the view that Dharmapāla held the position of a suzerain in North India. In the *Udayasundarī-kathā*, a *champū-kāvya* composed in the first-half of the eleventh century A.D. by Soḍḍhala, a Gujarāti poet, king Dharmapāla is referred to as *Uttarāpatha-svāmin* or lord of Uttarāpatha.[2] This Dharmapāla can only refer to the Pāla emperor of that name. The expression *Pañcha-Gauḍa* is also possibly reminiscent of the Gauḍa empire of Dharmapāla.[3]

An idea of the extent of Dharmapāla's empire may be obtained if we can definitely locate the states mentioned in v. 12 of the Khalimpur copper-plate. Among them the kingdoms of Gandhāra, Madra, and Kuru are well-known, and were situated respectively in the western, central, and eastern Punjab, while Kīra corresponds to the Kangra district in the north-eastern part of the same province.[4] Matsya corresponds to modern Alwar State with parts of Jaipur and Bharatpur, while Avanti is certainly modern Malwa. Bhoja, Yadu, and Yavana countries cannot be located with certainty. The last-named probably refers to an Arab principality, either in the Indus Valley or in the North-Western Frontier Province. The Yadus or Yādavas ruled over the kingdom of Siṁhapura in the Punjab,[5] but other regions like Mathurā and Dvārakā are also traditionally associated with them, and it cannot be exactly ascertained which section of the Yādavas accepted the suzerainty of Dharmapāla. In view, however, of the fact that the list includes several other states in the Punjab, the Yadu principality of Siṁhapura is probably meant. As regards the Bhojas they are an ancient people, and the kingdom of Bhojakaṭa, mentioned in Vākāṭaka copper-plates, includes at least a part of Berar, if not the

[1] *TK.* 216-17, 230.
[2] Gaekwad Oriental Series edition, pp. 4-6.
[3] See *supra* p. 14.
[4] For the location and an account of the kingdom of Kīra, cf. *IHQ.* IX. 11-17.
[5] Cf. the Lakkhāmaṇḍal Praśasti (*EI.* I. 10).

whole of it.[1] Thus, on the whole, it may be safely concluded that Dharmapāla exercised his imperial sway over the Punjab, Eastern Rājputāna, Malwa and Berar, and this was the result of the victorious military campaigns which carried him as far as Kedāra in the western Himālayas, and in course of which he defeated Indrarāja and other kings.

It must be borne in mind, however, that the empire of Dharmapāla was not like that of the Mauryas or Guptas, or even of the later Pratīhāras. The vassal states were not annexed to the central dominions of the emperor, and their rulers were left undisturbed so long as they acknowledged the supremacy of the emperor, and rendered such homage and military assistance as might have been fixed by usage or treaties. So we cannot regard the Punjab, Eastern Rajputāna, Malwa, and Berar as integral parts of a consolidated dominion under the direct rule of the emperor. This is clearly indicated in verse 8 of the Monghyr copper-plate of Devapāla (No. 6), and is in consonance with the available evidences in our possession.

The kingdom of Kanauj, roughly corresponding to modern U.P., evidently stood on a different footing. Dharmapāla not only conquered it but drove its ruler away, and placed his own nominee on its throne. He had the coronation of this nominee, and probably also his own imperial coronation, celebrated at Kanauj in the presence of a large number of vassal chiefs. It was thus perhaps regarded as a ceremonial capital of the empire Although he did not definitely annex the kingdom of Kanauj to the central kingdom, comprising Bengal and Bihar, which was ruled by him in person, he left it in charge of his protégé Chakrāyudha, who owed his position entirely to the emperor, and whose status was thus very inferior to that of the other vassal chiefs.

We can thus easily visualise the structure of the Pāla empire under Dharmapāla. Bengal and Bihar, the nucleus of the empire, were under the direct rule of Dharmapāla, a long stretch of territory between the borders of Bihar and Punjab formed the dependency of Kanauj, while a large number of principalities in the Punjab, Eastern Rājputāna, Malwa, Berar, and probably also Nepal (if we believe the story in *Svayambhu Purāna*) formed the vassal states, enjoying internal autonomy but paying homage and obedience.

It seems very likely that Dharmapāla completed this imperial fabric during the period that intervened between the retirement of

[1] Cf. Mark. Collins, *The Geographical data of the Raghuvaṁśa and Daśa-kumāra-charita* (Leipzig, 1907), pp. 28, 37ff.

Dhruva and the re-appearance of his son Govinda III in the north. As these two events may be dated approximately at 780 and 800 A.D.,[1] we may roughly describe the career of Dharmapāla somewhat as follows:

c. 770 A.D.—Accession to the throne of Bengal.

c. 770-790 A.D.—Conquest of Magadha and a large part of U.P., even extending beyond Allahabad. Encounter with Vatsarāja and Dhruva in the Ganges-Jumna Doab.

c. 790-800 A.D.—Victorious campaign up to the Indus on the West, Himālayas in the North and even beyond Narbadā in the south.

Dharmapāla could follow unchecked a career of aggressive militarism in the west mainly because of the collapse of the power of his great adversary, the Pratīhāra king Vatsarāja. According to the Rāshṭrakūṭa records, the latter was forced by Dhruva to leave his kingdom and betake himself to the trackless desert.[2] In other words, Vatsarāja took shelter in the heart of Rājputāna which was a stronghold of the Gurjara power and was known after them as Gurjaratrābhūmi.[3] The Pratīhāras, however, had not given up their political ambitions. Vatsarāja's son and successor Nāgabhaṭa II made strenuous efforts to recover the lost grounds. He made alliance with the kings of Sindhu, Andhra, Vidarbha, and Kaliṅga. He thus seems to have organised a confederacy of states situated on the border of the Pāla and Rāshṭrakūṭa empires, and presumably put himself as their champion against both.[4]

Having consolidated his position by his successful diplomatic policy, Nāgabhaṭa decided to try his strength against his mighty adversary Dharmapāla.[5] He marched against Kanauj where

[1] *RA.* 57; *EI.* XXIII. 217. The date of Govinda III's northern expedition has been fully discussed in App. II, dealing with Pāla chronology.

[2] *Supra* p. 106.

[3] *GP.* 8, 30. Dr. H. C. Ray's view that Mālava was at this time "under the strong grip of the Pratīhāras" (*DHNI.* II. 845), is disproved, among other grounds, by the fact that Nāgabhaṭa is said to have seized by a sudden attack the hill-fort of the king of Mālava (*EI.* XVIII. 108). This shows that the Pratīhāras had lost hold of Mālava. The known facts, therefore, support the view, that after the Pratīhāra king Vatsarāja was defeated by Dhruva, Mālava acknowledged the suzerainty of Dharmapāla, but later, when Govinda III invaded Northern India, it became a vassal state of the Rāshṭrakūṭas. Cf. D. C. Ganguly, *Paramāras*, p. 18.

[4] *GP.* 38-39.

[5] The struggle between Dharmapāla and Nāgabhaṭa II has been discussed at length with full references to authorities in *GP.* 40-44. The views stated there form the basis of the account in the text. Mr. N. N. Das Gupta has offered a different construction of the whole history (*JBORS.* XII. 361 ff) His theory that Dharmapāla was defeated by Govinda III shortly before his encounter with

Dharmapāla had placed his protégé Chakrāyudha on the throne. Chakrāyudha was defeated[1] and fled to Dharmapāla. A battle between Dharmapāla and Nāgabhaṭa, with the empire of Northern India at stake, was now inevitable. That Nāgabhaṭa made extensive preparations for this enterprise, and was loyally helped by his feudal or allied chiefs, is known from several epigraphic records. The Jodhpur inscription of the Pratīhāra chief Bāuka[2] informs us that his father Kakka gained renown by fighting with the Gauḍas at Mudgagiri *i.e.* Monghyr. Vāhukadhavala, probably a feudatory chief of the Pratīhāras, is said to have defeated a king called Dharma (*i.e.* Dharmapāla),[3] while another feudatory, Śaṅkaragaṇa, claims to have conquered the Gauḍa country and presented it to his overlord.[4] As there are reasons to believe that all these chiefs were contemporaries of Nāgabhaṭa II, it may be safely presumed that they all took part in the campaign of Nāgabhaṭa against Dharmapāla.

It would appear, from the statement about Kakka, that a pitched battle was fought at Monghyr. It would mean therefore that Nāgabhaṭa had marched into the very heart of Dharmapāla's dominions. It is difficult to explain this weakness or lack of preparation on the part of Dharmapāla, and it is not unlikely that he was attacked by the king of Tibet about the same time (see *infra* p. 124).

If we are to trust the Pratīhāra records, Nāgabhaṭa II must have inflicted a crushing defeat upon Dharmapāla. But the Pratīhāra king was not destined to enjoy the fruits of his victory. Once more the dream of founding a Pratīhāra empire was shattered by the Rāshṭrakūṭas. The triumphant career of Nāgabhaṭa II, like that of his father Vatsarāja, was cut short by the invasion of the hereditary enemy from the south.

It is not improbable that in his dire necessity Dharmapāla invoked the aid of the Rāshṭrakūṭa king against the common enemy. It is equally likely that the growing power of Nāgabhaṭa alarmed Govinda III and he advanced to the north of his own accord. For we know from the Pratīhāra records, that Nāgabhaṭa made alliance with the states on the border of the Rāshṭrakūṭa kingdom, and captured the strongholds of Mālava. As Mālava commanded the route between the Rāshṭrakūṭa kingdom and Northern India, and was probably then subordinate to the former, the Rāshṭrakūṭa king might have accepted the challenge so defiantly thrown, and advanced to the north to settle his own

Nāgabhaṭa would no doubt explain the advance of Nāgabhaṭa II right up to Monghyr, but there does not appear to be sufficient reason to accept this view.

[1] *EI.* XVIII. 108, verse 9.
[2] *EI.* XVIII. 98, verse 24.
[3] *EI.* IX. 7, verse 9.
[4] *EI.* XV. 14, verse 14

accounts with the Pratīhāra ruler. But whatever may be the cause, the effect of the war was decisive. Nāgabhaṭa's power was thoroughly crushed, and Govinda III made a triumphal march right across his dominions at least up to the Ganges-Jumna Doab.[1]

The victorious campaign of Govinda III against Nāgabhaṭa II saved Dharmapāla and Chakrāyudha from imminent disaster. No wonder, that, as the Rāshṭrakūṭa records tell us, both of them submitted, of their own accord, to Govinda III.[2] Indeed, circumstances would even justify the assumption that it was a pre-arranged affair, and that this was the price by which they purchased the timely intervention of the Rāshṭrakūṭa monarch. In reality, this submission meant nothing. For, as they anticipated, Govinda III soon returned to the Deccan, and Dharmapāla was left free to re-organise his empire.

There is no reliable evidence in support of the view, generally accepted, that Nāgabhaṭa, after having defeated Chakrāyudha, annexed his kingdom and transferred his seat of government to Kanauj, which henceforth continued to be the capital of the dynasty.[3] As a matter of fact, the only known record of Nāgabhaṭa, dated 815 A.D., was found in Buchkala, in the Jodhpur State, and the locality is said to be within his kingdom proper (*sva-vishaya*).[4]

[1] *GP.* 42-43; *RA.* 66; *TK.* 231.

[2] ".............to whom (Govinda III) ....those (kings) Dharma and Chakrāyudha surrendered of themselves" (Sanjān Plates of Amoghavarsha I, l. 23. *EI.* XVIII. 253. Also cf. *RA.* 66; *TK.* 232). Mr. N. N. Das Gupta's view that Dharmapāla was defeated in a battle by Govinda III is not supported by the evidence that he quotes (*JBORS.* XII. 362-63). There are reasons to believe that Govinda III's success against Dharmapāla was too insignificant to be included in contemporary records, and was magnified at a later date (Cf. App. II).

[3] This view is held by Dr. R. S. Tripathi who also places the victories of Nāgabhaṭa II against Dharmapāla and Chakrāyudha after his own defeat at the hands of Govinda III (*TK.* 232-33). In view of the decisive defeat inflicted upon Nāgabhaṭa II by Govinda III, this sequence of events does not appear to be reasonable. The only evidence in favour of the theory that Nāgabhaṭa II transferred his capital to Kanauj is a statement in the *Prabhāvaka-charita* that king Nāgāvaloka of Kānyakubja, the grandfather of Bhoja, died in 890 V.S. This Nāgāvaloka is probably Nāgabhaṭa II, but the statement about the capital may have been due to the fact that Kanauj was long known as the famous capital of the Pratihāras at the time when the book was composed. If Nāgabhaṭa really transferred his capital to Kanauj, it was very likely towards the close of his reign (c. 830 A.D.), after Dharmapāla had died and his son and successor Devapāla had enjoyed the position of supreme ruler of Northern India for a fairly long period, as is claimed in his records. But the date of the death of Nāgabhaṭa II, *viz.*, 890 V.S. (=833 A.D.) is very doubtful as the earliest known date of his grandson Bhoja, is 836 A.D., *i.e.* only three years later. The authenticity of the passage in *Prabhāvaka-charita* may therefore be justly doubted.

[4] *EI.* IX. 200.

Taking everything into consideration, the most probable view seems to be that Dharmapāla's empire did not suffer any considerable diminution during the rest of his life, and the power of the Pratīhāras was mainly confined to Rājputāna. It is, therefore, reasonable to suppose that Dharmapāla spent his last days in peace, and we may well accept the statement, made in the Monghyr copper-plate (v. 12) of Devapāla, that there was no disturbance in the dominions when he succeeded his father Dharmapāla.

Dharmapāla fully deserved the rest after a long reign of stress and storm. His career was indeed a remarkable one. He inherited a small kingdom from his father, but his prowess and diplomacy, aided by good fortune, enabled him to establish a vast empire in Northern India. He had to fight many battles, and some times suffered serious reverses. On more than one occasion his position appeared precarious. But his undaunted spirit triumphed over all obstacles, and he launched Bengal into a career of imperial glory and military renown to which there has been no parallel before or since. The lure of the imperial city of Kanauj which proved the ruin of Śaśāṅka's kingdom paved the way for his grand success, and Bengal's dream of founding an empire in Northern India was at last fulfilled. We can only dimly realise its profound effect on Bengal. The country which only two generations ago was trampled under feet by a succession of foreign invaders, and suffered almost complete political disintegration, suddenly came to be the mistress of the whole of Northern India up to its furthest limits. It was nothing short of a miracle, and no wonder that the whole country was resounding with the tales of wonderful achievements of its remarkable ruler. The court-poet did not perhaps very much exaggerate the state of things when he wrote the following verse about Dharmapāla :

"Hearing his praises sung by the cowherds on the borders, by the foresters in the forests, by the villagers on the outskirts of villages, by the playing groups of children in every courtyard, in every market by the guardians of the weights, and in pleasure-houses by the parrots in the cages, he always bashfully turns aside and bows down his face."[1]

Dharmapāla assumed full imperial titles *Parameśvara Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja*, whereas his father is called only *Mahārājādhirāja*. That Dharmapāla introduced pomp and grandeur worthy of the empire he had built up, would be evident from the following description of what looks like an Imperial *Durbar* held in Pāṭaliputra :

"Now—from his royal camp of victory, pitched at Pāṭaliputra, where the manifold fleets of boats proceeding on the path of the Bhāgīrathī make it seem

[1] Khalimpur copper-plate, v. 13 (*EI*. IV. 252).

as if a series of mountain-tops had been sunk to build another causeway (for Rāma's passage); where, the brightness of daylight being darkened by densely packed arrays of rutting elephants, the rainy season (with its masses of black clouds) might be taken constantly to prevail; where the firmament is rendered grey by the dust, dug up by the hard hoofs of unlimited troops of horses presented by many kings of the north; and where the earth is bending beneath the weight of the innumerable foot-soldiers of all the kings of Jambudvīpa, assembled to render homage to their supreme lord."[1]

In spite of the obvious exaggeration of the poet, the above passage is a fair index of the imperial vision of Bengal towards the close of the reign of Dharmapāla.

It is extremely unfortunate that we know so little about the personal history of Dharmapāla, except his political and military achievements. The Khalimpur copper-plate shows that he must have reigned for at least thirty-two years. Tāranātha's statement that he ruled for sixty-four years cannot be credited in the absence of any corroborative evidence. The Monghyr copper-plate informs us that he married Raṇṇādevī, the daughter of the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Parabala. This Rāshṭrakūṭa king is usually identified with the king of that name who was ruling in Central India in 861 A.D., but this seems very doubtful.[2] It is very likely that Dharmapāla's father-in-law belonged to the well-known Rāshṭrakūṭa family of the Deccan,[3] but no king of that family with Parabala as name or *biruda* is known to us so far.

The Khalimpur copper-plate refers to Yuvarāja Tribhuvanapāla as *dūtaka* of the Grant. Whether he is identical with Devapāla, who succeeded Dharmapāla, or a different person, is not known to us. In the latter case, he was probably the eldest son of Dharmapāla who either predeceased his father, or was superseded by Devapāla under circumstances not known to us.

[1] *Ibid.*

[2] Cf. Pathāri Pillar inscription, *EI.* IX. 248ff. The date of this inscription has been read as *Saṁvat* 917. The figure for hundred is not quite clear on the published facsimile, but the reading has been accepted by all scholars. Now the accession of Devapāla, son of Raṇṇādevī and Dharmapāla, is generally assigned to c. 810 or 815 A.D. Unless Devapāla was a minor, of which there is no evidence, he must have been born some time before 795 A.D., and his mother's birth cannot be placed later than 780 A.D. Her father Parabala, therefore, must have been born about 760 A.D. and was therefore more than hundred years old when the Pathāri inscription was engraved. Even if we assume that Devapāla was a child at the time of accession, we have to believe that Dharmapāla married, at a fairly advanced age, a young girl of twenty or thereabouts, and that his father-in-law survived him for nearly half a century. These may not be impossible, but are certainly very unusual. On the whole, the identity of Dharmapāla's father-in-law and the king Parabala of the Pathāri inscription must be regarded as doubtful (cf. *RA.* 55, f.n. 19).

[3] The late Dr. Fleet proposed to identify him with Govinda III (*BG.* I. Part II, p. 394), but he is not known to have any *biruda* like Parabala.

Dharmapāla had a younger brother named Vākpāla. It is claimed in a later record that he was a valiant hero and destroyed the enemies of his brother. It may be presumed that Vākpāla was the commander of the royal army. Similarly, we learn from another later record that a Brāhmaṇa named Garga was the minister of Dharmapāla. In this record of his descendant, Garga is given the credit of making Dharmapāla, the lord of the east, ultimately the lord of the other directions too. These credits, claimed on behalf of the general and minister of Dharmapāla, may, no doubt, have some foundation, but we must accept them with caution, specially as they come from interested parties.

According to Tibetan tradition, Dharmapāla was a great patron of Buddhism. He is said to have founded the famous Vikramaśīla *vihāra* in Magadha on the top of a hill on the bank of the Ganges. It had 114 teachers in different subjects and included a central temple, surrounded by 107 others, all enclosed by a boundary wall.[1] According to Buston,[2] Dharmapāla also built a magnificent monastery at Odantapurī, but according to Tāranātha,[3] it was founded by either Gopāla or Devapāla. Curiously enough, the legend related by Buston about the foundation of Odantapurī *vihāra* by Dharmapāla is exactly the same as is told by Tāranātha about the foundation of a *vihāra* at Somapurī in Varendra by Devapāla. Now the recent archaeological excavations[4] carried out at Paharpur, in Rajshahi district, leave no doubt that its ruins represent the famous Somapura-*vihāra*, and the name of the place is still preserved in the neighbouring village called Ompur. According to the short inscriptions on some clay seals found in Paharpur, the Somapura-*vihāra* was founded by Dharmapāla. Tāranātha says that Dharmapāla founded fifty religious schools.[5] As already stated above, Dharmapāla was the patron of the great Buddhist writer Haribhadra.[6] It reflects great credit upon the emperor, that amid his pre-occupations with war and politics he could devote his thought and activities to these pious and peaceful pursuits.

[1] *Tar.*, p. 217. According to other traditions, however, Devapāla is regarded as its founder (Cordier–*Catalogue*, III. 321-22).

The reference to the *Vihāra* as *Śrīmad-Vikramaśīla-deva-mahāvihāra* (Mitra-*Nepal*, 229) shows that Vikramaśīla was another name or *biruda* of Dharmapāla (or Devapāla) who founded it.

[2] P. 157.

[3] P. 206.

[4] For an account of these excavations cf. *ASM*. No. 55 (Paharpur—K. N. Dikshit).

[5] P. 217.

[6] Buston, pp. 156 ff

Although Dharmapāla was a Buddhist king, he was not hostile to Brahmanical religion in any way. He granted land for the worship of a Brahmanical god (Ins. No. 2) and followed the rules of caste laid down in the scriptures (No. 6, v. 5). The appointment of a Brāhmaṇa Garga as his minister, whose descendants occupied the post for several generations (No. 16), shows that politics was not influenced in any way by religion.

2. *Devapāla* (*c. 810–850 A.D.*)

Parameśvara Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Devapāla, who succeeded to the throne about 810 A.D., was fully endowed with the prowess and other qualities of his father. The available records seem to indicate that Devapāla not only maintained the empire intact, but even extended its boundaries. The most interesting of these is the Bādāl Pillar inscription (No. 16) which contains an eulogy of five generations of hereditary Brahman ministers who served under four rulers of the Pāla dynasty beginning from Dharmapāla. Extravagant pretensions are put forward in this record on behalf of Darbhapāṇi and his grandson Kedāramiśra who both served under Devapāla. It was Darbhapāṇi's diplomacy, so we are told, which enabled Devapāla to exact tributes from the whole of Northern India, from the Himālaya to the Vindhya mountains, and from the Eastern to the Western seas (v. 5). It was again the intelligence of Kedāramiśra that enabled Devapāla to enjoy the sea-girt earth after having exterminated the Utkalas, curbed the pride of the Hūṇas, and destroyed the haughtiness of the Draviḍa and Gurjara lords (v. 13).

Similar credit is given to the general of Devapāla in the record of a descendant of the former (Ins. No. 14). We are told that on the approach of Devapāla's forces, under his brother Jayapāla, the king of Utkala fled from his capital city, and the king of Prāgjyotisha submitted without any fight (v. 6). Devapāla's own Grant (No. 6) shows that his career of victory led him as far as Kāmboja in the west and Vindhya mountains in the south.

To whomsoever might belong the credit of these remarkable achievements, they undoubtedly testify to the brilliance of Devapāla's reign. It appears that he peacefully inherited the vast empire of his father and firmly established his authority (Ins. No. 6, v. 12). But it was soon apparent that he could not long maintain the extensive empire left by his father merely by peaceful and diplomatic methods, as his minister Darbhapāṇi claims to have done. In those unsettled times, nothing but a policy of blood and iron could have checked the disruptive forces within the empire and aggressive

designs of ambitious neighbours. So Devapāla's long reign of about forty years must have witnessed a series of military campaigns, including those against the Prāgjyotishas, Utkalas, Hūṇas, Gurjaras, and Draviḍas.

Prāgjyotisha is a well-known name of the Brahmaputra valley, and the province or a part of it was also called Kāmarūpa.[1] According to Hiuen Tsang, Kāmarūpa included the whole of Assam valley and extended up to the Karatoyā river in the west. According to the Bhagalpur copper-plate (No. 14), when Jayapāla set out on a conquering expedition the king of Prāgjyotisha lived in happiness for a long time by accepting the order (of Jayapāla) to desist from warlike preparations. It is thus evident that the king of Assam accepted the suzerainty of Devapāla and was left unmolested. This king was probably either Harjara or his father Prālambha.[2]

The conquest of Utkala was, however, more thorough. In addition to the passage quoted above about the flight of the Utkala king from his capital, the Bādāl Pillar inscription informs us that the Utkalas were exterminated. There might have been one or more expeditions against Utkala, and the kingdom was thoroughly subjugated. Tāranātha informs us that Orissa, like Bengal, suffered from internal disruption,[3] shortly before Gopāla was elected king. But like the Pālas in Bengal, the Kara dynasty restored the solidarity of the kingdom. Śubhakara, the third king of this dynasty who bore imperial titles, has been identified by S. Lévi with the king of Wu-cha who sent an autographed manuscript to the Chinese emperor Te-tsong in 795 A.D. His son Śivakara also bore imperial titles, and ruled in Orissa.[4] After him nearly two hundred years elapsed before we hear of another Kara king in Orissa who might or might not have been descended from the earlier Karas.[5] The Pālas probably conquered Utkala during or immediately after the reign of

[1] In the Kamauli Grant of Vaidyadeva (*EI.* II. 348), the village granted is said to be situated in Kāmarūpa-*maṇḍala* and Prāgjyotisha-*bhukti*. This shows that Kāmarūpa was regarded as a smaller unit within Prāgjyotisha which necessarily included a larger area. It is, however, generally accepted that the same country was known as Prāgjyotisha in ancient times and as Kāmarūpa in mediaeval times (*HK.* 1 ff).

[2] For the contemporary history of Assam, cf. *DHNI.* I. 241 ff.

[3] *Tar.*, p. 197.

[4] Chaurasi copper-plate. *JBORS.* XIV. 292 ff.

[5] The chronology of the Kara kings is involved in difficulties. For the view adopted in the text, cf. *Orissa* by R. D. Banerji, Vol. I, Ch. XI; *JAHRS.* X. 56. According to Vinayak Misra, the Kara dynasty came to an end about 794 A.D. with the reign of Daṇḍimahādevī (*Orissa under the Bhauma Kings*, 71).

Śivakara, and their boast that they had exterminated the Utkalas was perhaps not altogether unjustified.

The Hūṇas were the nomadic tribe from Central Asia that played a dominant rôle in the history of India during the latter half of the fifth and the first half of the sixth century A.D. After that they had ceased to be a great power, but ruled over one or more small principalities. One of these was situated in the seventh century A.D. in Uttarāpatha, near the Himālayas.[1] It was probably this principality which was successfully invaded by Devapāla.[2] Thereafter he proceeded up to Kāmboja, which was to the north-west of the Punjab and immediately to the north of Gandhāra. The Hūṇa principality and Kāmboja were both situated on the outskirts of the Pāla empire and this sufficiently explains Devapāla's hostility with them. These detailed conquests show that Devapāla not only maintained intact the empire he had inherited from his father, but also extended its boundaries by the conquest of Assam and Orissa on one side, and Kāmboja and Hūṇa principalities on the other. The claim that he ruled from the Himālaya to the Vindhya, and from the Bay of Bengal to the Arabian Sea, was perhaps not very far from truth, and was in any case a pardonable exaggeration, and not a 'mere bombast.'[3]

The Gurjaras mentioned in the Bādāl Pillar inscription were undoubtedly the Pratīhāras, the old enemy of the Pālas. We have seen above (*supra* pp. 106, 112) how the crushing defeat inflicted by the Rāshṭrakūṭas forced the Pratīhāras to confine their activities within Rājputāna and Dharmapāla enjoyed his mighty empire undisturbed by them. Devapāla also appears to have enjoyed a brief respite from their hostile activities during the first part of his reign. For, as we have seen above (*supra* p. 112), apart from a doubtful reference in a Jaina text, there is nothing to prove that Nāgabhaṭa II recovered his power and occupied Kanauj, and if he did so it was probably not long before the date of his death (833 A.D.) as given in the same text. The records of the Pratīhāras show that this did not revive the old glory of the family. The reign of Nāgabhaṭa's son Rāmabhadra was an inglorious one, and there are indirect evidences to show that he suffered severe reverses in the hands of his enemies, who even for a time ravaged his own dominions.[4] Rāmabhadra's son and successor Bhoja, however, infused a new

1 *HC*. Ch. v.

2 A territorial unit called Hūṇa-*maṇḍala* in Malwa is referred to in an inscription of the Paramāra king Vākpatirāja (*EI*. XXIII. 102). Both Vākpati and Sindhurāja are said to have defeated the Hūṇas. Thus there was probably also a Hūṇa principality in Malwa.

3 *TK*. 240.

4 *GP*. 45-46. *TK*. 236-37.

energy and strength among the Pratīhāras, and seems to have recovered some of the territories lost by his father. The Barah and Daulatpura copper-plates show that he had occupied Kanauj and recovered Kālañjara-*maṇḍala* by 836 A.D., and Gurjaratrā, his ancestral territories in Rājputāna, by 843 A.D.[1] But, evidently, his success was short-lived. For we find Gurjaratrā in possession of another branch of the Pratīhāra family in 861 A.D., and Bhoja was defeated by the Rāshṭrakūṭas some time before 867 A.D.[2]

It seems to be almost certain that the lord of Gurjaras, whose pride was curbed by Devapāla, was no other than Bhoja I. According to the Bādāl Pillar inscription, this must have occurred fairly late in the reign of Devapāla, for the credit of this achievement is taken by Kedāramiśra, the grandson of his first minister Darbhapāṇi. We may, therefore, fix the date of this event between 840 and 850 A.D.[3] It was probably shortly after this that Bhoja was defeated by the Rāshṭrakūṭas. These successive defeats so weakened his power, that even Gurjaratrā, the territory round Jodhpur in Rājputāna, passed out of his hands. Thus in spite of a short period of trouble, Devapāla had not much to fear from the Pratīhāras, and during his long reign that eternal enemy of the Pālas was kept in check.[4]

[1] *GP.* 48; *TK.* 237-38. [2] *GP.* 48-50; *TK.* 242-43.

[3] *GP.* 49-50; *TK.* 240-41.

[4] It may be surmised that in his fight against Bhoja, Devapāla was helped by the Chandellas of Khajurāho. There is a tradition that the founder of this dynasty supplanted the Pratīhāras (V. A. Smith, *Early History of India*, 3rd ed., p. 390). This statement has not been believed by the historians. But if we remember that Bhoja was ruling over Kālañjara-*maṇḍala* in 836 A.D. (which might well have included Khajurāho about 50 miles from Kālañjara), that he was defeated by Devapāla about 840 A.D., and that since then the Chandellas were in continuous occupation of Khajurāho and the neighbourhood (even though they had later to acknowledge the suzerainty of the Pratīhāras), it would not be unreasonable to hold that the Chandellas had helped Devapāla in his fight against Bhoja, and were rewarded, after the latter's defeat, with the sovereignty of the territory near Khajurāho, perhaps under the suzerainty of Devapāla. Vākpati, the second king in the traditional genealogical list of the Chandellas, is said to have made the Vindhyas his pleasure-mount (Khajurāho Ins. v. 13, *EI.* I. 126) and Vākpati's son Vijaya is said to have, like Rāma, in his warlike expeditions reached even the southernmost point of India, presumably for the benefit of an ally, as the epithet '*suhrid-upakriti-daksha*' shows (Khajurāho Ins. v. 20, *EI.* I. 142). Now Devapāla also claims to have reached the Vindhya region and, as we shall see, there are reasons to believe that he sent an expedition to the extreme south. It may be presumed, therefore, that the earlier Chandella kings were allies of Devapāla. This strengthens the view that they might have ousted Bhoja from Kālañjara with the help of the Pāla king.

Dr. H. C. Ray thinks that the Chandella kings referred to above were feudatory chiefs, perhaps of Bhoja (*DHNI.* 670-671). Of this there is no

Lastly, we come to the Draviḍas who were also defeated by Devapāla. They are usually identified with the Rāshṭrakūṭas, and as the Rāshṭrakūṭas were, like the Gurjaras, the rivals of the Pālas, the reference may be to a successful fight with them.[1] It would then appear that Devapāla had to fight with both the hereditary enemies for maintaining his empire, and he was evidently more successful than his father. His Rāshṭrakūṭa rival was undoubtedly Amoghavarsha.[2]

The term Draviḍa is, however, usually applied to denote, not the Deccan plateau which formed the Rāshṭrakūṭa dominions proper, but the South Indian peninsula. It is not unlikely, therefore, that the Draviḍa ruler defeated by Devapāla belonged to this region, and in that case he was most probably his contemporary Pāṇḍya king Śrī-Māra Śrī-Vallabha who ruled about 815-862 A.D. According to the Sinnamanur Plates, this Pāṇḍya king repulsed a hostile confederation consisting of the Gaṅgas, Pallavas, Choḷas, Kaliṅgas, Magadhas, and others at a place identified with modern Kumbakonam. The Magadhas in the above list can only refer to the forces of the Pāla king who was in occupation of Magadha during this period. The conquest of Utkala had brought Devapāla into contact with the Kaliṅgas and there was every inducement on his part to enter into a close political association with them, and, through them, with the other powers mentioned above. For these powers were hostile to the Rāshṭrakūṭas, and were repeatedly defeated by them during the reigns of Dhruva and Govinda III. The common enmity to the Rāshṭrakūṭas would have cemented the alliance, and the southern powers, whose dominions were ruthlessly devastated by the Rāshṭrakūṭas, would naturally try to gain the support of such a powerful ruler as Devapāla.

It appears from the Veḷvikkuḍi Grant that the Pāṇḍya king was at one time a member of a similar confederacy of Eastern kings which defeated the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Krishṇa I at Venbai. But evidently he had seceded from it and was an object of its attack. The Sinnamanur Plates refer to his success against the confederacy

definite evidence, though it is the general view (*GP.* 55). As Dhaṅga ascended the throne about 954 A.D., Vākpati and Vijaya, who were removed respectively five and four generations from him, may be regarded as contemporaries of Devapāla.

[1] *BI.* 205.

[2] Devapāla's success must have been facilitated by the internal discords in the Rāshṭrakūṭa kingdom. For details cf. *RA.* 73-77. Dr. Altekar is wrong in his statement that the Pāla records claim that Nārāyaṇapāla had defeated a Draviḍa king (*Ibid.* p. 77). The claim is really made on behalf of Devapāla. Dr. Altekar's identification of the Draviḍa king with Amoghavarsha seems, however, to be quite reasonable, though his view about the struggle between the Pālas and the Rāshṭrakūṭas, based on the wrong assumption, is open to doubt.

at Kumbakonam, but it is just possible that there were other episodes in connection with this campaign which were less favourable to him.[1]

It is thus quite likely that the Draviḍa king, whose pride was curbed by Devapāla, was the Pāṇḍya ruler Śrī-Māra Śrī-Vallabha. This view is strengthened by verse 15 of the Monghyr copper-plate (No. 6) which describes the empire of Devapāla as bounded by the Himālayas in the north and Rāmeśvar Setubandha in the south. It is no doubt an exaggeration, but there would be at least some basis for this, if we accept the above view. Some military victory near Rāmeśvar in the Pāṇḍya kingdom could be easily magnified by the court-poet, and would offer some explanation of the statement about the extent of his empire; but it would be very curious indeed that such a statement should be made without absolutely any basis of fact. Similarly, the claim of the Chandella king Vijaya that he reached, in course of his conquest, the extreme south where Rāma built his bridge, would be equally absurd unless we suppose that he did this in company with some powerful king; and from what has been said above,[2] this king may be Devapāla. It is difficult to believe that two court-poets writing in different countries at different times should concoct the same baseless story about two different kings. The available evidences do not enable us to make any positive statement, but the hypothesis about a victorious expedition of Devapāla in the southernmost part of India cannot now be ruled out as altogether fantastic.

Devapāla ruled for at least 35 years[3] and his reign may be placed between 810 and 850 A.D. Under him the Pāla empire reached the height of its glory. His suzerainty was acknowledged over the whole of Northern India from Assam to the borders of Kashmir, and his victorious forces marched from the Indus to the upper reaches of the Brahmaputra, and from the Himālayas to the Vindhyas, perhaps even to the southernmost extremity of India. His name and fame were known far outside India, and king Bālaputradeva of the Śailendra dynasty ruling in Java, Sumatra, and Malay Peninsula sent an ambassador to him.[4] The object of this embassy was to ask for a grant of five villages with which the

[1] This hypothesis of Devapāla's military expedition to the extreme south of India is based on Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri's very interesting paper "The Pūrvarāja of the Veḷvikkuḍi Grant" (*Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar Commemoration Volume*, 1936, pp. 197 ff). Cf. also *supra* p. 106, f.n. 2.

[2] Cf. *supra* p. 119, f.n. 4.

[3] The Nālandā Copper-plate (No. 7) is dated in the 39th or 35th Year. (See App. I).

[4] *Ibid.*

Śailendra king proposed to endow a monastery he had built at Nālandā. The monastery of Nālandā was in those days the seat of international Buddhist culture, and the Pāla emperors, as its guardians, held a high position in the Buddhist world. Devapāla was a great patron of Buddhism and he granted the request of the Śailendra king. His interest in the Nālandā monastery and deep devotion to the Buddhist faith are also known from the Ghoshrawa inscription (No. 8). It records that Indragupta, a Brahman of Nagarahāra (Jelalabad) and a learned Buddhist priest, received ovation from Devapāla and was appointed the head of the Nālandā monastery.

A general review of the Pāla kingdom towards the close of Devapāla's reign is given by the Arab traveller and merchant Sulaiman, who made several voyages to India and wrote an account of it in 851 A.D. The Pāla kingdom is referred to as Ruhmi (Rahma, according to Al'Masūdi). The Pāla king is said to be at war with his neighbours, the Rāshṭrakūṭas and the Gurjara-Pratīhāras. His troops were more numerous than those of his adversaries. In his military campaigns he took 50,000 elephants, and ten to fifteen thousand men in his army were employed in fulling and washing cloths.[1]

Reference has already been made above to the nature of Dharmapāla's empire. So far as we can judge from the available records, Devapāla, too, does not seem to have exercised any direct administrative control over any territory outside Bengal and Bihar. In the case of the Imperial Guptas and Gurjara-Pratīhāras, not only inscriptions all over Northern India invoke their name as suzerain, but we have also the records of their officers governing remote territories like Kathiawar peninsula. No such records of the two Pāla emperors have yet been discovered beyond the confines of the modern provinces of Bengal and Bihar. It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that so far as the rest of the imperial territories were concerned, they were governed by local rulers who acknowledged the suzerainty of the Pālas. This is corroborated by v. 8 of the Monghyr copper-plate of Devapāla (No. 6).[2]

In this connection, it is interesting to note that reference is made to a Pāla ruler, Yuvarāja by name, in the *Udayasundarī-*

[1] Cf. *E.&D.* I. 5, 25; S. H. Hodivala, *Studies in Indo-Muslim History*, pp. 4-6. For an explanation why the Pāla kingdom is referred to as Ruhmi or Rahma, cf. *IHQ*. XVI. 232 ff.

[2] According to this verse, Dharmapāla, after his *digvijaya*, removed the sorrows of the conquered kings by presenting them excellent rewards and permitted them to return to their own kingdoms.

kathā composed by Soḍḍhala.[1] We learn from this book that a famous poet, Abhinanda by name, graced his court.[2] The *Rāmacharita*,[3] composed by this poet Abhinanda, gives more details about Yuvarāja who is described as a great conqueror. He had the epithet Hāravarsha, and was the son of Vikramaśīla. He is also referred to as the ornament of the Pāla family (*Pāla-kula-chandra, Pāla-kula-pradīpa* etc.) founded by Dharmapāla (*Dharma-pāla-kula-kairava-kānan-endu*).[4]

These epithets leave no doubt that Yuvarāja Hāravarsha belonged to the Pāla family of Bengal. According to the *Rāmacharita*, he was a powerful king, a statement which is also corroborated by the *Udayasundarī-kathā*. The question, therefore, naturally arises whether he is to be identified with a known Pāla king, or regarded as a ruler over some territory outside Bengal and Bihar. It has been suggested that Vikramaśīla, the father of Yuvarāja, was another name of Dharmapāla who founded the Vikramaśīla monastery, and Hāravarsha is identical with Devapāla.[5] Dr. D. C. Ganguly infers from the epithet Hāravarsha that he was connected with some Rāshṭrakūṭa kingdom. As Parabala, the Rāshṭrakūṭa king of Central India, was the father of Dharmapāla's queen, Dr. Ganguly suggests that Yuvarāja might have ruled over that territory.[6] None of these conjectures except perhaps the identity of Dharmapāla (or Devapāla) and Vikramaśīla can be supported by positive evidence. There are some grounds for the belief that the poet Abhinanda was an inhabitant of Bengal,[7] and in that case Yuvarāja Hāravarsha may be the well-known Pāla king Devapāla or his son. But if Yuvarāja Hāravarsha ruled over any territory outside Bengal and Bihar, this will be the only instance where any part of the Pāla empire was directly administered by the Pāla kings or members of their family. In any case, the history of Yuvarāja Hāravarsha is an interesting episode in the

[1] Published in Gaekwad Oriental Series.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 2.

[3] Published in Gaekwad Series.

[4] Cf. I. 110 (p. 10); Introductory verses to chs. VIII (p. 63) and VI (p. 47); concluding verses of chs. X (p. 91), XI (p. 102), XXVI (p. 234), VI (p. 55), and XVIII (p. 253).

[5] Introduction to *Rāmacharita*, pp. xx–xxiii. That Vikramaśīla was possibly a *biruda* of Dharmapāla or Devapāla rests on some positive evidence, presumably unknown to the editor (*supra*, p. 115, f.n. 1). But the patron of the poet is also called Pṛithvīpāla in the concluding verse of Canto 2, and Pṛithivīpāla in the last verse of Canto 10 (MS. C) or 18 (MS. A). This may be another name of Hāravarsha. In that case he must be different from Devapāla.

[6] *Bhāratavarsha*, Śrāvaṇa, 1340, pp. 247 ff.

[7] Introduction to *Rāmacharita*.

history of the Pālas. All that we can infer about the period of his rule from literary evidence, is that he flourished certainly before the eleventh century A.D. and probably before the tenth.[1]

In conclusion, a brief reference may be made to the relation between Bengal and Tibet during the reigns of the first three Pāla kings. The political relation between Tibet and India down to the middle of the eighth century A.D. has been discussed above (see *supra* pp. 91-93). In spite of the victories of Lalitāditya, the Tibetan rulers continued their aggressive policy, and the Tibetan chronicles, of a later date, record their great achievements in India during the period 755-836 A.D.

The Tibetan king Khri-srong-lde-btsan (755-97 A.D.), regarded as an incarnation of Bodhisatva Mañjuśrī, was a very powerful king. According to the *Chronicles of Ladakh,* "he subdued all the provinces on the four frontiers" including "China in the east and India in the south."[2] In a Tibetan text, composed not much later than the ninth century A.D., his son Mu-tig Btsan-po is said to have brought under his sway two or three (parts of) Jambudvīpa.[3] This somewhat vague statement is supplemented by the following details in the same text:

"In the south the Indian kings there established, the Raja Dharma-dpal and Drahu-dpun, both waiting in their lands under order to shut up their armies, yielded the Indian kingdom in subjection to Tibet: the wealth of the Indian country, gems and all kinds of excellent provisions, they punctually paid. The two great kings of India, upper and lower, out of kindness to themselves (or in obedience to him), pay honour to commands."[4]

The king Dharma-dpal in the above passage undoubtedly refers to the Pāla king Dharmapāla. As regards Drahu-dpun, Dr. Thomas, who edited the text, suggests that it might mean "nephew, or grandson, Drahu," but it does not help us in identifying him.

The next important king Ral-pa-can (*c.* 817–*c.* 836 A.D.), according to the *Chronicles of Ladakh,* conquered India as far as the

[1] This lower limit is furnished by the date of Soḍḍhala who was a contemporary of both Chhittarāja and Mummunirāja, rulers of Konkaṇa, whose known dates are respectively 1026 A.D. and 1060 A.D. (Introduction to *Udayasundarīkathā,* p. 1). The editor of *Rāmacharita* places Abhinanda and Hāravarsha before 900 A.D. on the ground "that Soḍḍhala in his chronology of famous poets of ancient India beginning from Vālmīki down to his own time places Abhinanda before Rājaśekhara" (pp. xx-xxi).

[2] Francke, *Antiquities of Tibet,* Part II, p. 87. Dr. L. Petech, *Study on the Chronicles of Ladakh. IHQ.* xv. 65.

[3] F. W. Thomas, *Tibetan Literary Texts and Documents concerning Chinese Turkestan,* p. 270.

[4] *Ibid.* 272-78.

Gaṅgāsāgara. This has been taken to represent the mouth of the Ganges.[1]

The facts culled above from the Tibetan texts throw interesting light upon the political relation between India and Tibet during the first century of Pāla rule. How far the Tibetan claims of conquest and supremacy in Indian plains may be regarded as historical facts, it is difficult to say. For the Indian sources contain no reference to any military campaign from Tibet, far less to the exercise of political authority by its king in India proper. While, therefore, we must suspend our final judgment about Tibetan conquest and supremacy in India until fresh evidence is available, we must not ignore the possibility that perhaps the course of events in Bengal during 750-850 A.D. was influenced by Tibet to a much larger extent than we are apt to imagine.[2]

III. The Decline and Fall of the Empire.

The glory and brilliance of the Pāla empire did not long survive the death of Devapāla. The rule of his successors, whose names and approximate dates are given below, was marked by a steady process of decline and disintegration which reduced the Pālas almost to an insignificant political power in North India.

1.	Vigrahapāla I or Śūrapāla I	c. 850-854 A.D.
2.	Nārāyaṇapāla	c. 854-908 A.D.
3.	Rājyapāla	c. 908-940 A.D.
4.	Gopāla II	c. 940-960 A.D.
5.	Vigrahapāla II	c. 960-988 A.D.

[1] Francke, *op. cit.* 89-90. Francke assigns to Ral-pa-can the date 804-16 A.D., but Dr. Petech (*op. cit.* 81) gives the date 817-836 A.D.

[2] The alleged victories of Khri-srong-lde-btsan (755-97 A.D.), for instance, fit in well with what we know of the political condition in Bengal about the middle of the eighth century A.D., and might have played no inconsiderable part in placing a Buddhist ruler on its throne. The specific mention of Dharmapāla's submission to this Tibetan ruler or his son is of special interest. Whatever we might think of the Tibetan claim, a conflict between Dharmapāla and the Tibetan ruler is not an improbable one and might explain the former's defeat by Nāgabhaṭa II. In this connection we might recall the tradition that Dharmapāla occupied the throne of Nepāla which, we know, was under the political subjection of Tibet during the greater part of the seventh and eighth centuries A.D. The expedition of Dharmapāla to Kedāra and Nepāla may also have some connection with Tibetan aggression. The alleged conquests of Ral-pa-can (817-836) might explain the weakness of the Pāla kingdom under Devapāla which enabled Bhoja to conquer Kanauj some time before 836 A.D. The advance of the Tibetans up to

Devapāla was succeeded by Vigrahapāla. There is some dispute among scholars regarding the relationship between the two, but the most probable view seems to be that Vigrahapāla was the nephew of Devapāla, and not his son (*cf.* App. IV). According to the genealogy preserved in the Grants of Nārāyaṇapāla and subsequent kings, Dharmapāla had a younger brother named Vākpāla, who was evidently his general and fought his enemies in all directions. Vākpāla's son Jayapāla was the great general of Devapāla, and conquered Orissa and Assam for his royal cousin. Vigrahapāla, who ascended the throne after the death of Devapāla, was probably the son of this Jayapāla, though some take him to be the son of Devapāla.

For the present, we are absolutely in the dark regarding the circumstances which led to this change in the line of succession. It might have been due to the absence of any heir of Devapāla, although this does not appear to be very likely. For the Monghyr copper-plate of Devapāla (No. 6) shows that he had installed his son Rājyapāla as Crown-Prince, and that this son was alive in the year 33 of his reign, *i.e.* not more than seven or eight years before his death. Of course, Rājyapala might have died during this interval, as appears to have been the case with Tribhuvanapāla mentioned above. On the other hand, we cannot altogether eliminate the possibility of an internal dispute regarding succession[1] in which the general Jayapāla might have placed his own son on the throne with the support of his army For the sudden collapse of the Pāla Empire naturally leads to the presumption of a catastrophe of this kind, and the view of an internal disruption is supported by the mention of the kingdoms of Aṅga, Vaṅga, and Magadha in a Rāshṭrakūṭa record dated 866 A.D.

Vigrahapāla, who inherited the throne and the vast empire of Devapāla, is described in very vague and general terms as having destroyed his enemies. The old Kedāramiśra continued as minister. But the Bādāl Pillar inscription (No. 16) which attributes to his diplomacy the great military victories of Devapāla, has nothing to

the mouth of the Ganges would account for the sudden collapse of the Pāla kingdom under Nārāyaṇapāla, if we could push forward the dates of the incident by two decades, which is not very unreasonable in view of the proved inaccuracies in the chronology of the Tibetan chronicles. Lastly, the usurpation of a part of the Pāla kingdom by Kāmboja chiefs in the tenth century A.D. may be ultimately traceable to the Tibetan expeditions, for Kāmboja was an Indian name for Tibet (cf. App. V). But all these are mere conjectures and speculations for the present, and undue stress should not be laid on them till corroborative evidence is forthcoming.

[1] This view finds support in the story of Yuvarāja Hāravarsha referred to *supra* p. 123, if he is regarded as the son of Devapāla, and we accept his association with the Rāshṭrakūṭa kingdom in Central India as suggested by Dr. D. C. Ganguly.

say of the next king whom it calls Śūrapāla. Śūrapāla was obviously another name of Vigrahapāla,[1] and all that the Bādāl Pillar inscription tells us about him is that he attended the sacrificial ceremonies performed by his minister, and poured holy water over his own head for the welfare of his empire. It offers a strong contrast between the warlike Devapāla and his successor who was evidently of a pacific and religious disposition. Vigrahapāla maintained this attitude till the last. He abdicated the throne in favour of his son Nārāyaṇapāla and retired to a religious life.[2] He had married a princess of the Haihaya family named Lajjā.[3]

Nārāyaṇapāla also resembled his father rather than his grand-uncle. He had Kedāramiśra's son Guravamiśra as his minister, but the Bādāl Pillar inscription records no glorious military achievement to his credit. The Bhagalpur copper-plate grant (No. 14), issued in the 17th regnal year of Nārāyaṇapāla, also refers to his prowess in only vague and general terms, but does not mention any specific conquest. Although he ruled for no less than fifty-four years (No. 15), we have not the least evidence of any military victory of Nārāyaṇapāla. All these raise a strong presumption about the weakness of these two Pāla rulers, and this presumption is fully borne out by external evidences, particularly the history of the Rāshṭrakūṭas and the Pratīhāras, the two hereditary enemies of the Pālas.

As regards the Rāshṭrakūṭas,[4] we learn from the Sirur inscription, dated 866 A.D., that the ruler or rulers of Aṅga, Vaṅga, and Magadha paid homage to king Amoghavarsha (814–*c.* 880 A.D.). The internal history of the Rāshṭrakūṭas makes it highly improbable that Amoghavarsha could have undertaken an expedition against the Pāla ruler before he had defeated the king of Veṅgi some time about 860 A.D. It is likely that after the conquest of Veṅgi, the Rāshṭrakūṭa forces proceeded along the eastern coast and invaded the Pāla kingdom from the south. It was perhaps of the type of the occasional military raids of the Rāshṭrakūṭas into Northern

[1] N. Vasu regarded Śūrapāla as the son of Devapāla (*VJI.* 216), but the identity of Śūrapāla and Vigrahapāla is upheld by all scholars (*GL.* 82 f.n.; *BI.* 217).

[2] Ins. No. 14, v. 17.

[3] Ins. No. 14, v. 9. According to Epic and Puranic traditions, Haihaya was a great-grandson of Yadu. His descendants, called Haihayas, were divided into many groups. But the most important line, during the historical period, that claimed to belong to this family, was the Kalachuri. There were two branches of Kalachuris ruling in Northern India at the time when Vigrahapāla ruled, *viz.*, those of Gorakhpur and Ḍāhala (or Tripurī). The queen of Vigrahapāla presumably belonged to one of these families.

[4] References and authorities for the statements about the Rāshṭrakūṭas will be found in *RA.* 75-78.

India, and had no permanent effect. But it must have considerably weakened the military power and the political prestige of the Pālas. The conquest of a portion of Rāḍhā by the Śulki king *Mahārājādhirāja* Raṇastambha of Orissa may also be assigned to the same period,[1] and may not be altogether unconnected with the Rāshṭrakūṭa invasion.

These reverses of the Pālas in the south probably created a favourable opportunity for the Pratīhāra king Bhojadeva to renew his ambitious efforts which were checked by Devapāla. The defeat inflicted by the Rāshṭrakūṭas and the pacific disposition of Vigrahapāla and his successor Nārāyaṇapāla must have encouraged Bhoja to wrest the empire of Northern India from the Pālas.[2] His enterprise proved successful. He first turned his attention towards the west and destroyed the remnant of the political suzerainty enjoyed by the Pālas. He then proceeded to the east and subjugated extensive territories both in Bundelkhand and the United Provinces. It does not appear that he had encountered any opposition from the Pālas until he reached almost the borders of Magadha. But in spite of the weakness of the Pālas, Bhoja made extensive preparations against them.

We learn from the Kahla Plate[3] that Guṇāmbhodhideva, a Kalachuri king of Gorakhpur, who obtained some territories from Bhojadeva, snatched away the sovereignty of the Gauḍas. This Bhojadeva is undoubtedly the great Pratīhāra king, who was successful in his expedition against the Pāla king and probably rewarded the services of his feudatory Kalachuri chief by grant of lands. It is also probable that Bhoja obtained the assistance of the famous Kalachuri king Kokkalla I of Ḍāhala. Kokkalla's date is not definitely known, but he probably ruled between 840 and 890 A.D.[4] He is said to have granted freedom from fear to Bhoja and plundered the treasuries of various kingdoms including Vaṅga.[5] The two events may not be unconnected, and in any case Kokkalla's raid against Vaṅga, if it was really a fact, must have facilitated the success of Bhoja. Another chief that probably accompanied Bhoja

[1] *Orissa*, 193-95.

[2] References and authorities for the statements about the Gurjara-Pratīhāras will be found in *GP.* 50 ff.

[3] v. 9. *EI.* VII. 89.

[4] *DHNI.* II. 754; *GP.* 52 f.n. 4; *IHQ.* XIII. 482 ff. A recent writer fixes the reign of Kokkalla I between 840 and 885 A.D. (*IHQ.* XVII. 117 ff).

[5] Bilhari Ins. v. 17, *EI.* I. 256, 264; Benares CP. v. 7, *EI.* II. 306; Amoda Plates. *EI.* XIX. 75 ff; Bhoja has been identified by some scholars with Bhoja II, and by others with Bhoja I, but the former view appears to be untenable (*IHQ.* XIII. 482 ff). Cf. also *GP.* 52 f.n. 4; *DHNI.* II. 754; *TK.* 255-56; *IHQ.* XVII. 117 ff.

was the Guhilot king Guhila II who is said to have defeated the Gauḍa king.[1] His father Harsharāja joined the campaigns of Bhoja in the early part of his reign. It is, therefore, exceedingly likely that he accompanied Bhoja in his successful Gauḍa expedition and took the credit thereof; for it is difficult to believe that he could have led an expedition against distant Gauḍa on his own account.

Bhoja had thus organised a formidable confederacy against the Pālas, and it seems he inflicted a crushing defeat upon them. Being secured against any trouble from the Rāshṭrakūṭas in the south,[2] and having laid low the power of the Pālas, Bhoja could enjoy in peace the extensive empire he had established in Northern India. In the west he had conquered Karnal in the Punjab and the Kathiawar Peninsula, and probably extended his empire up to the borders of the Muslim principalities in the Indus Valley. In the east the Kalachuris of Gorakhpur as well as the Chandellas of Jejākabhukti (Bundelkhand) acknowledged his suzerainty, and the Pālas were humbled to the dust. Armed with the resources of this vast empire, Bhoja's son and successor Mahendrapāla followed up the victory over the Pālas with relentless severity. Six of his inscriptions,[3] found in Patna and Gayā districts, leave no doubt that Magadha was annexed to the Pratīhāra empire. Recently, an inscription of Mahendrapāla (No. 55), dated in his fifth year, has been found on a pillar unearthed during the excavations at Pāhārpur in Rajshahi district, the site of the famous Somapura-vihāra of Dharmapāla. It proves that even Northern Bengal had passed on for a time into the hands of the Pratīhāras.

It is difficult to give a satisfactory explanation of this phenomenal success of the Pratīhāras and the complete collapse of the Pālas during the latter half of the ninth century A.D. The personality of Bhoja and his success in organising a powerful confederacy are no doubt important factors, but able rulers like Devapāla might have successfully contended against both. The failure of the Pāla kings undoubtedly demonstrates their personal incapacity and want of foresight and diplomacy. But there might have been other factors at work. We have already hinted at the probability of a disputed succession after the death of Devapāla. Further, the records of Assam and Orissa show that both these neighbouring

[1] Chatsu Ins. v. 23. *EI.* XII. 15.

[2] The revolt of the Gurjara branch, the constant struggle with the Eastern Chālukyas, and above all the pacific disposition of Amoghavarsha may explain the absence of active hostility between him and Bhoja. Cf. *RA.* 77.

[3] Ins. Nos. 53, 54, 56-59.

kingdoms, which had been subjugated by Devapāla, had again become powerful. In Assam, king Harjara, one of whose known dates is 829-30 A.D.,[1] had assumed imperial titles,[2] and the record of his son Vanamāla describes him as a powerful emperor and conqueror in many battles.[3] In Orissa, the Śailodbhava dynasty re-established its supremacy on the ruins of the Karas, and Sainyabhīta III Mādhavavarman Śrīnivāsa (c. 850 A.D.) established the greatness of his family. He and his successor are said to have performed Aśvamedha, Vājapeya and other sacrifices, in token of their political supremacy.[4]

The rise to power of these two dependent principalities might have been either the cause or the effect of the weakness of the Pāla kings. In the absence of positive evidences we cannot hazard any conjecture in favour of the one or the other, but we must keep in view the possibility of the reaction of the greatness of these powers upon the fortunes of the Pālas.

It has been mentioned above that Vigrahapāla I married a Haihaya princess. This might have been a move on the part of the Pālas to win over the friendship of the Kalachuris. We know that the Rāshṭrakūṭas formed numerous matrimonial alliances[5] with the family of the powerful Kalachuri king Kokkalla who had at least eighteen sons (and possibly also numerous daughters). It is not unlikely that Vigrahapāla's queen was a daughter of Kokkalla himself. But, as we know from the case of the Rāshṭrakūṭas, such alliances did not always prevent political rivalries, leading to active hostilities. In the case of the Pālas, we cannot say whether the Haihaya alliance was really of any help to them. But it is certain that they were able to recover the possession of Northern Bengal and Magadha before the reign of Nārāyaṇapāla was over.

Three inscriptions[6] of Nārāyaṇapāla, dated in the years 7, 9 and 17, and found in Bihar, seem to prove that the kingdom of Magadha was in his possession at least up to his 17th year *i.e. c.* 870 A.D. The dates of the seven inscriptions of Mahendrapāla found in Bengal and Bihar range between years 2 and 9 or 19, *i.e. c.* 887 to 894 or 904 A.D. The Pratīhāra power must have been considerably weakened shortly after the last-named year. For some time between 915 and 917 A.D., if not earlier, the Pratīhāra king Mahīpāla, son of Mahendrapāla, was disastrously defeated by the Rāshṭrakūṭas. His capital was sacked and he fled towards the east, hotly pursued by his enemies.

[1] Tejpur Ins., Gupta Samvat 510. *JBORS.* III. 511.
[2] Hāiyungthal CP. *Kām-Śās.* 50.
[3] Tejpur Pl. vv. 11-16. *Kām-Śās,* 60-61.
[4] *JAHRS.* X. 14.
[5] *DHNI.* II. 760-61.
[6] Ins. Nos. 12-14.

This catastrophe indicates the weakness of the Pratihāras, which was perhaps due to internal troubles[1] following the death of Mahendrapāla and gave an opportunity to the Pālas to retrieve their position. In any case, as we find an inscription of Nārāyaṇapāla (No. 15) in Bihar dated in the year 54 of his reign, we may presume that the Pāla king recovered Northern Bengal and Bihar about 908 A.D., if not earlier.

Nārāyaṇapāla had also probably come into conflict with the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Krishṇa II who succeeded Amoghavarsha about 880 A.D., and ruled till 914 A.D. It is said in the Rāshṭrakūṭa records[2] that Krishṇa II was the 'preceptor charging the Gauḍas with the vow of humility,' and that 'his command was obeyed by Aṅga, Kaliṅga, Gaṅga, and Magadha.' A petty chief of Velanāṇḍu (in Kistna district) named Malla I, who claims to have subdued the Vaṅgas,[3] Magadhas, and the Gauḍas, probably accompanied Krishṇa II in his expedition. The nature and result of this expedition are difficult to determine, but perhaps Krishṇa II had some success against the Pāla king. It is very likely that the Rāshṭrakūṭa Tuṅga, whose daughter Bhāgyadevī was married to Nārāyaṇapāla's son Rājyapāla, is no other than Jagattuṅga,[4] the son of Krishṇa II. In that case we may presume that the marriage alliance had brought about, at least temporarily, a cessation of hostilities.

Nārāyaṇapāla died about 908 A.D., and was succeeded by his son Rājyapāla who ruled for at least thirty-two years.[5] As noted above, Rājyapāla married Bhāgyadevī, the daughter of the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Tuṅga. He is credited in official records with works of public utility such as excavation of big tanks and construction of lofty temples.[6] He was succeeded by his son Gopāla II, who ruled for at least seventeen years.[7] Several records of both these kings have been found in Magadha,[8] and a copper-plate grant, dated in

[1] *TK.* 254 ff.

[2] Deoli CP. v. 13. *EI.* v. 193.

[3] Pithapuram Ins. v. 11. *EI.* IV. 40, 48

[4] Cf. Ins. No 31, v 8. Tuṅga is usually identified with Jagattuṅga, son of the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Krishṇa II, who died about 914 A.D. (*JASB.* 1892, Part I, p. 80). Jagattuṅga predeceased his father and never ascended the throne. His son Indra III succeeded Krishna II. Tuṅga may be regarded as an abbreviated form of Jagattuṅga who was a contemporary of Nārāyaṇapāla, father of Rājyapāla. But the proposed identification, though very probable, cannot be regarded as certain. For we must remember that there were other Rāshṭrakūṭa branches, *e.g.*, the one ruling in Gujarat. R. D. Banerji is inclined (*BI.* 226) to identify Tuṅga with Tuṅgadharmāvaloka whose inscription was found at Bodh-Gayā (R. L. Mitra, *Buddha-Gayā*, p. 195, pl. XL). N. Vasu identified Tuṅga with Krishṇa II himself who had the epithet Śubhatuṅga (*VJI.* 128).

[5] Cf. Ins. No. 21.

[6] Ins. No. 31. v. 7.

[7] See *infra* p. 179.

[8] Ins. Nos. 17-22, 24.

the sixth year of Gopāla II (No. 23), proves his possession of Northern Bengal.

Thus after the end of the disastrous reign of Nārāyaṇapāla, the prospects of the Pālas appeared somewhat bright. The Pratīhāras had suffered a severe blow from which they were not likely to recover for some time, and there was a truce with the Rāshṭrakūṭas cemented by a marriage alliance. The worst crisis in the history of the Pālas seemed to have been over.

But unfortunately for the Pālas, the downfall of the Pratīhāras let loose other forces which proved no less disastrous to them. Two great powers, the Chandellas and the Kalachuris, tried to establish their political supremacy in Northern India, and the Pālas had to bear the brunt of their aggressive imperialism.

Yaśovarman, who laid the foundations of the greatness of the Chandellas, is said to have carried on incessant military campaigns all over Northern India, and dominated the whole region from the Himālayas to Malwa and from Kashmir to Bengal. Even making due allowance for the exaggerations of the court-poets, he must be credited with military successes over a wide range of territories. In particular, his conquest of the famous fortress of Kālañjara gave him a dominant position in the heart of Northern India.[1] According to the Chandella records, Yaśovarman 'was a sword to (cut down) the Gauḍas as if they were pleasure-creepers,' and his son Dhaṅga, who ascended the throne some time before 954 A.D. and ruled till about 1000 A.D., kept in prison the queens of Rāḍhā and Aṅga.[2] These statements may not be literally true, but we may take it for granted that during the reigns of Rājyapāla and his two successors, Gopāla II and Vigrahapāla II, Bengal fared badly in the hands of Yaśovarman and Dhaṅga. About the same time the Kalachuri rulers also raided various parts of the country. In the Kalachuri records we find reference to incursions against Bengal by two successive Kalachuri kings, Yuvarāja I and his son Lakshmaṇarāja, who probably ruled in the second and third quarters of the tenth century A.D. Yuvarāja is said to have had amorous dalliances with the women of Gauḍa, Karṇāṭa, Lāṭa, Kāśmīra and Kaliṅga.[3] This is a poetical way of describing military raids in these countries, but it is difficult to get any idea of their nature and effect. Lakshmaṇarāja is said to have been 'skilful in breaking (*i.e. defeating*) Vaṅgāla,'[4] which, as we have seen above, refers to Southern and

[1] *DHNI.* II. 674-75.
[2] Khajuraho Ins. No. II, verse 23; No. IV, verse 46 (*EI.* I. 126, 132, 145).
[3] Bilhari Ins. v. 24 (*EI.* I. 256, 265).
[4] Goharwa CP. v. 8 (*EI.* XI. 142).

part of Eastern Bengal.[1] As Lakshmaṇarāja is also known to have conquered Oḍra,[2] it is very probable that he advanced through Orissa to the deltaic coast of Bengal, as Rājendra Choḷa did a few years later.

These foreign raids may be regarded both as causes and effects of the military weakness and political disruption of the Pāla kingdom. The reference in Kalachuri and Chandella inscriptions to the various component parts of the kingdom such as Aṅga, Rāḍhā, Gauḍa, and Vaṅgāla as separate units may not be without significance. It is true that sometimes a kingdom is referred to by the name of a particular province within it, but evidences are not altogether wanting that in the present instance, the different states named above really formed independent or semi-independent principalities.

The Pāla records definitely state that the paternal kingdom of the Pālas had been possessed by an usurper[3] before the end of the reign of Vigrahapāla II, or in any case shortly after it. It is generally held that this usurper belonged to the line of Kāmboja chiefs who are known to have ruled about this time both in West and North Bengal. It was formerly believed that this was due to the successful invasion of Northern Bengal by the Kāmbojas,[4] a hill-tribe from the north, west or east.[5] But the recently discovered Irdā copper-plate grant (No. 49) puts an altogether different complexion on the whole matter.

This grant was issued from the capital city called Priyaṅgu, and records grants of land in Vardhamāna-*bhukti* (Burdwan Division) by the Parameśvara, Paramabhaṭṭāraka, Mahārājādhirāja, the illustrious Nayapāladeva in the 13th year of his reign. He had succeeded his elder brother Nārāyaṇapāla, who was the son of Rājyapāla and Bhāgyadevī. Rājyapāla is given all the three imperial titles, and is described as the ornament of the Kāmboja family.

Now the queen of the Pāla king Rājyapāla, as we have seen above, was also named Bhāgyadevī, and it is, therefore, tempting to identify the king Rājyapāla of the Irdā Plate with the Pāla king of that name. But this assumption is not free from difficulties, and there is no general agreement among scholars on this point.[6] If we identify Rājyapāla of the Irdā Plate with the Pāla king Rājyapāla, we must hold that there was a partition of the Pāla

[1] See *supra* p. 19; *IHQ*. XVI. 225 ff.
[2] Bilhari Ins. v. 62 (*EI*. I. 260, 268).
[3] Ins. No. 31, v 12.
[4] Dinajpur Pillar Ins. (No. 48) refers to a Gauḍa king of Kāmboja family. For theories of Kāmboja conquest, cf. *GR*. 37; *BI*. 231.
[5] See *infra* p. 191.
[6] See *infra* p. 190.

kingdom after his death between two branches of the Pāla family. If we do not accept this identification, the most reasonable view would be to hold that Rājyapāla, an ambitious and powerul Kāmboja chief, perhaps a dignitary or high official under the Pālas,[1] had taken advantage of the weakness of the Pāla kingdom to set up an independent principality which ultimately comprised Western and Northern Bengal. The theory of a Kāmboja invasion is not supported by any positive evidence, and appears to be highly improbable.

But whichever of these views we may accept, the main fact remains that the Pāla kingdom was split up during the second half of the tenth century A.D. The kingdom of Rāḍhā, mentioned in the inscription of Dhaṅga, therefore, probably refers to the kingdom of Nārāyaṇapāla and Nayapāla comprising Western and Northern Bengal with its capital at Priyaṅgu. The other kingdom, Aṅga, would naturally refer to the dominions under Gopāla II and Vigrahapāla II, which probably comprised Aṅga and Magadha.

The Pālas also lost control over East and South Bengal, and we have definite evidence of the existence of several independent kingdoms in this region. The earliest is the kingdom of Harikela under a Buddhist king Mahārājādhirāja Kāntideva, known from an incomplete draft of a copper-plate grant found in an old temple at Chittagong.[2] This grant was issued from Vardhamānapura, presumably the capital of Kāntideva. According to I-tsing,[3] Harikela denoted the eastern limit of Eastern India, but some other Chinese authority applies the name to the coastland between Samataṭa and Orissa.[4] If Vardhamānapura is to be identified with Burdwan, as no other city of that name in Bengal is known to us, the latter interpretation of Harikela, which is also supported by Indian sources,[5] would be preferable. Kāntideva's kingdom would thus comprise a

[1] The Pālas employed mercenary forces, and certainly recruited horses from Kāmboja (Ins. No. 6, v. 13). Mr. N. G. Majumdar has very rightly observed that "if horses could be brought into Bengal from the north-western frontier of India during the Pāla period, it is not unreasonable to suppose that for trade and other purposes some adventurers could also have found their way into that province" (*EI*. XXII. 153). Mercenary soldiers (specially cavalry) might have been recruited from the Kāmbojas, and some of them might have been influential chiefs. It has been suggested also that the Kāmbojas might have come to Bengal with the Pratīhāras when they conquered part of this province (*DHNI*. I. 311; *IHQ*. XV. 511).

[2] *Modern Review*, 1922, p. 612. The original plate is now in the Dacca Museum.

[3] *I-tsing*. p. XLVI.

[4] Cf. the map at the end of vol. II. of St. Julien's translation of Hiuen Tsang which was originally published in Japan in 1710.

[5] Harikela is mentioned in Hemachandra's *Abhidhāna-chintāmaṇi* (v. 257) as a synonym of Vaṅga.

portion of South and West Bengal. The kingdom was presumably founded by him, as his father and grandfather are referred to as ordinary persons. He married Vindurati, the daughter of a great king, and this marriage probably helped him in carving out an independent principality. For the date of Kāntideva we are solely dependent on palaeographic evidence, and we may place his reign during the period 850-950 A.D.[1] It is very likely that Kāntideva flourished during the decadent period that set in after the death of Devapāla, and took advantage of the weakness of the central authority to found an independent kingdom in Eastern Bengal. Ultimately he extended his authority over Southern Bengal and probably even a part of Western Bengal. In other words, he might have been one of the earliest kings of Vaṅgāla, a kingdom which came into prominence since the tenth century A.D.

We know of another independent king, Layahachandradeva, who ruled near about Comilla for at least eighteen years[2] during the tenth century A.D.

Another dynasty, with names of kings also ending in *-chandra*, had set up an independent kingdom in Eastern Bengal during the second half of the tenth century A.D. Two rulers of this dynasty, Trailokyachandra and his son Śrīchandra, are known to have ruled over Harikela, with Chandradvīpa (comprising roughly the modern district of Bakarganj)[3] as their central seat of authority. As another king, Govindachandra, is known to have ruled over Southern and Eastern Bengal at the beginning of the eleventh century A.D., it is probable that he, too, belonged to the same family, and that the Chandra kingdom even originally comprised both Southern and Eastern Bengal.

It would thus appear that during the reigns of Gopāla II and his son and successor Vigrahapāla II, there were three well-defined kingdoms, *viz.*, the Chandra kingdom comprising East and South Bengal, the Kāmboja-Pāla kingdom comprising North and West Bengal, and the Pāla kingdom proper, comprising Aṅga and Magadha. Gopāla II and his son Vigrahapāla II had the curious misfortune of losing the paternal territory of the dynasty, though ruling over other parts of the kingdom.

[1] The editors of the Chittagong Plate have fixed its date on palaeographic grounds between 750-850 A.D. But although the general character of the alphabets would favour such an assumption, certain letters (notably *kh*, *ś*, and *n*) have decidedly later forms.

[2] The history of Layahachandra and the other Chandra kings mentioned below is discussed separately in Ch. IX. *infra* where full references are given.

[3] See *supra* pp. 17-18.

In verse 11 of the Bāngarh Grant of Mahīpāla (No. 31), the elephant-forces of Vigrahapāla II are said to have wandered in the eastern regions full of water, the Malaya mountains in the south, the desert regions[1] in the west, and the Himālaya mountains in the north. This description of the aimless wanderings of Vigrahapāla's forces in all directions was regarded by some scholars as a covert allusion to the loss of paternal kingdom by Vigrahapāla, and his vain attempt to seek help or refuge in various quarters.[2] A recently discovered copper-plate applies the same verse to Gopāla II.[3] This undoubtedly weakens the force of the argument in favour of the above interpretation, but the verse may not unreasonably be regarded as a poetic method of indicating the great catastrophe which befell the Pāla kingdom during the reigns of Gopāla II, Vigrahapāla II, and possibly Vigrahapāla III, to whom also the same verse is applied.

IV. RESTORATION UNDER MAHĪPĀLA (c. 988-1038 A.D.)

When Mahīpāla I succeeded his father Vigrahapāla II about 988 A.D., the prospect of his family was undoubtedly gloomy in the extreme. It reflects no small credit upon him that by heroic efforts he succeeded in restoring the fortunes of his family, at least to a considerable extent.

According to verse 12 of the Bāngarh Grant (No. 31), he recovered his paternal kingdom which was '*anadhikṛita-vilupta*.' This expression has been usually interpreted as 'snatched away (*vilupta*) by people who had no claim to it' (taking *anadhikṛita* in the sense of *anadhikārī*). Mr. N. G. Majumdar has pointed out that although this is possible, it is somewhat far-fetched, and the proper meaning of the expression is 'lost owing to non-occupation.'[4] But whatever interpretation we accept, it is clear that Mahīpāla recovered his paternal kingdom which was in possession of some other ruling family.

The expression 'paternal kingdom' has been taken by most writers to apply to Varendra,[5] which was in occupation of the

[1] The word read as '*taru*' in *GL*. 95 is really '*maru*' (desert). Cf. *EI*. XIV. 326.

[2] The view was first put forward by A. K. Maitreya (*GL*. 100. f.n.) and accepted by R. D. Banerji (*BI*. 239).

[3] v. 10 of Ins. No. 23. The same verse is applied to Vigrahapāla III (v. 14 of Ins. No. 39), but it was regarded as an error on the part of the composer. As Gopāla II is an earlier king, the verse must have been current before the time of Vigrahapāla II.

[4] *EI*. XXII. 152.

[5] For the expression '*janaka-bhūḥ*' is applied to Varendrī in *RC*.

Kāmboja ruler. But, as has been shown above, practically the whole of Bengal proper had passed out of the hands of the Pālas, and there is hardly any justification for regarding Varendra alone as the paternal kingdom of the Pālas. It would, therefore, perhaps, be better to take the paternal kingdom as generally meaning 'Bengal,' and consider how far Mahīpāla was successful in recovering it.

The first important evidence in this respect is furnished by a short inscription (No. 30) on an image of Vishṇu, found in a village called Bāghāura near Brahmanbaria in the Tippera district. It records the setting up of the image 'in Samataṭa, in the kingdom of Mahīpāla, in the year 3.' Although it is not absolutely certain whether king Mahīpāla of the inscription refers to the first or second king of that name, the probability is in favour of the former. In that case, we must presume that Mahīpāla must have recovered Eastern Bengal, or at least a part of it, before the end of the third year of his reign.[1]

Now, it is not possible for a king with his base in Aṅga and Magadha to proceed to Eastern Bengal without conquering either Varendra or Rāḍhā *i.e.*, Northern or Western Bengal. Mahīpāla evidently chose the former route. For his Bāngarh Grant (No. 31) shows that he was in occupation of Varendra (North Bengal) in the year 9 of his reign. We may thus hold that Mahīpāla had recovered Northern and Eastern Bengal within three years of his accession.

There is no positive evidence that he had recovered either Western or Southern Bengal. But some light is thrown on this question by the account of Rājendra Choḷa's invasion of Bengal which requires a somewhat detailed discussion.

The northern expedition of the great Choḷa emperor was led by one of his generals and lasted about two years from 1021 to 1023 A.D.[2] Its object was to bring, by force of arms, the sacred waters of the Ganges, in order to sanctify his own land. After

[1] The attribution of the Bāghāura Image Ins. to Mahīpāla I is not accepted by all. Dr. D. C. Ganguly takes the king to be the Pratīhāra king Mahīpāla, son of Mahendrapāla (*IHQ*. XVI. 179 ff). Dr. H. C. Ray opposes this view (*Ibid.* 631 ff.), and holds it as probable that Mahīpāla of the Bāghāura Image Ins. refers to the first Pāla king of the name. It may be admitted that the available evidence is not sufficient to lead to a definite conclusion, and it is not beyond the range of possibility that Mahīpāla of the Bāghāura Image Ins. may be either the Pratīhāra king Mahīpāla, or a local ruler of Samataṭa. The view propounded in the text is, however, held by most of the scholars, and appears to be *more probable* than any other hypothesis.

[2] For the account of the Choḷa expedition, cf. K. A. Nilakanta Śāstrī, *The Coḷas*, 247 ff.

conquering Oḍḍa-vishaya (Orissa) and Kosalai-*nāḍu*, the Choḷa general seized

"Taṇḍabutti, . . . (land which he acquired) after having destroyed Dharmapāla (in) a hot battle; Takkaṇalāḍam whose fame reached (all) directions, (and which he occupied) after having forcibly attacked Raṇaśūra; Vaṅgāḷa-deśa, where the rain water never stopped, (and from which) Govindachandra fled, having descended (from his) male elephant; elephants of rare strength, women and treasure, (which he seized) after having been pleased to frighten the strong Mahīpāla on the field of hot battle with the (noise of the) conches (got) from the deep sea; Uttiralāḍam (on the shore of) the expansive ocean (producing) pearls; and the Gaṅgā whose waters bearing fragrant flowers dashed against the bathing places."[1]

Now there can be no doubt that Taṇḍabutti, Takkaṇalāḍam, Uttiralāḍam and Vaṅgāḷa-deśa in the above passage denote respectively Daṇḍabhukti, Dakshiṇa-Rāḍhā, Uttara-Rāḍhā and Vaṅgāla.[2]

It has been reasonably inferred from the Tamil version quoted above, that the Choḷa general "attacked and overthrew, in order, Dharmapāla of Daṇḍabhukti, Raṇaśūra of Southern Rāḍhā, and Govindachandra of Vaṅgāla, before he fought with Mahīpāla and conquered Uttara-Rāḍhā." It is not definitely stated that Mahīpāla was the ruler of Uttara-Rāḍhā, though that seems to be the implication, as no separate ruler of this kingdom is mentioned, and the defeat of Mahīpāla preceded its conquest. According to the Sanskrit version, however, Southern Rāḍhā was conquered before Daṇḍabhukti,[3] a view which is difficult to accept on account of the geographical position of the two.[4]

[1] This is the translation of Prof. Śāstrī (*Coḷas*, 249, as amended in *IHQ*. XIII. 151-52) which differs to some extent from that of Hultzsch (*EI*. IX. 233) in respect of the passage concerning Mahīpāla. It may be noted that Hultzsch's translation "Uttiralāḍam, as rich in pearls as the ocean," or an alternative translation "close to the sea yielding pearls" (*JRAS*. 1937, p. 89), is more acceptable than that of Śāstrī, for the region is not on the sea-coast, as the latter would imply. As regards Mahīpāla, there is some controversy as to whether it refers to the Pāla king Mahīpāla I, or is only a common noun meaning 'king' and has reference to a ruler of the Orissa (Oḍḍa) country (*JRAS*. 1935, pp. 661-66; 1937, pp. 79-90). But most scholars accept the view of Kielhorn that Mahīpāla, referred to in the Choḷa inscription, is the first Pāla ruler of that name (*IHQ*. XIII. 149). Prof. S. K. Aiyangar holds that Mahīpāla refers to king of Orissa, even if it is taken as a personal name (*JRAS*. 1937, pp. 79-90).

[2] Prof. Aiyangar's view that Vaṅgāla was a general name of Bengal and not a part of it (*JRAS*. 1937, p. 82) is unacceptable in view of the specific mention of Uttara-Rāḍhā and Dakshiṇa-Rāḍhā, and specially as we know that the name Vaṅgāla was used about this time to denote a part of Bengal. It is not, however, identical with Vaṅga division of Bengal, as Prof. Aiyangar assumes (*Ibid*).

[3] *Coḷas*, 248, 251.

[4] But cf. *JRAS*. 1937, p. 84.

The Choḷa campaign, as Professor K. A. Nilakanta Śāstrī has rightly observed, "could hardly have been more than a hurried raid across a vast stretch of country."[1] We also agree with him that the statement in the Tiruvālangādu Plates that the water of the Ganges was carried to Rājendra by the defeated kings of Bengal at the bidding of the Choḷa general is a boast without foundation. The Choḷa conquest, no doubt, inflicted losses and miseries upon the people, but does not seem to have affected in any way the political condition of the country.

The detailed account, however, seems to show that Daṇḍabhukti, Southern Rāḍhā, and Vaṅgāla were independent kingdoms at the time of the Choḷa invasion. Professor Śāstrī says that

"the language of the Tamil inscription appears to suggest, what seems likely even otherwise, that Mahīpāla had a sort of supremacy over the other chiefs named in this context, and that the overthrow of Dharmapāla, Raṇaśūra, and Govindachandra led to the final struggle in which Mahīpāla was captured together with another person called Saṅgu, perhaps his Commander."[2]

It is difficult to accept the Professor's statement that Mahīpāla was captured in the final struggle, as it is explicitly stated that Mahīpāla was 'put to flight'[3] or 'frightened.' It is equally difficult to find any support in the Tamil passage, quoted above, for the overlordship of Mahīpāla over the other kingdoms mentioned in it, except perhaps in the case of Uttara-Rāḍhā. As we have seen above, Daṇḍabhukti was included within the kingdom of the Mahārājādhirāja Nayapāla which also probably included Rāḍhā and Varendra, and Southern and Eastern Bengal were ruled over by the Chandra kings, when Mahīpāla ascended the throne. It would, therefore, be more reasonable to conclude that Govindachandra ruled over the old Chandra kingdom or at least a considerable part of it, and Dharmapāla, perhaps a scion of the Kāmboja family, still held Daṇḍabhukti; while a new dynasty, the Śūras, about whom we shall hear more hereafter (see *infra* p. 210) had established its authority in South Rāḍhā. Mahīpāla was thus able to recover, in addition to North and a part of East Bengal, only the northern part of Rāḍhā *i.e.*, approximately that portion of the present Burdwan Division which lies to the north of the Ajay river.

[1] *Colas*, 247. This is also the view of Prof. Aiyangar (*JRAS*. 1937, p. 85).

[2] *Colas*, 251-52. The reference to Saṅgu would, of course, be omitted now in view of the amended translation proposed by Śāstrī (*IHQ*. XIII. 151-52) and quoted above.

[3] This is the translation of Hultzsch (*EI*. IX. 233) and that given by Śāstrī in *Colas* (p. 252). But Śāstrī has now substituted it by 'frighten' (*IHQ*. XIII. 151-52). But even this does not support Śāstrī's contention that Mahīpāla was captured.

The findspots of Mahīpāla's inscriptions[1] show that he was in possession of North and South Bihar. As the inscriptions of Nārāyaṇapāla, Rājyapāla, Gopāla II, and probably also of Vigrahapāla II, have been found in South Bihar,[2] it may be regarded as having been in the continuous possession of the Pālas since its recovery after the conquest of Mahendrapāla, but we are not sure whether North Bihar was inherited or conquered by Mahīpāla.

According to an inscription found in Sārnāth near Benares (No. 29), and dated *Saṁvat* 1083, construction and repairs of many sacred structures on that site were undertaken by the order of Mahīpāla, king of Gauḍa,[3] the actual work having been entrusted to his two brothers Sthirapāla and Vasantapāla. Normally, we would be justified in inferring from such a record that Mahīpāla's suzerainty extended up to Benares in the year 1026 A.D. Such an inference is, however, liable to two objections: In the first place. Benares and Sārnāth being sacred places of almost international reputation, construction of buildings there by Mahīpāla does not necessarily imply any political suzerainty over the region. Secondly, as the work of construction is referred to as a past event, Mahīpāla probably died before the record was set up; at least, it is not necessary to conclude that Mahīpāla was alive in 1026 A.D.[4]

These are, no doubt, forceful arguments, but cannot be regarded as conclusive. As regards the first, the suzerainty over Benares may not be a necessary implication, but in view of the fact that Mahīpāla's dominions certainly included the whole of Bihar, it is, in any case, a reasonable inference, so long at least as it is not proved that Benares was under the rule of a different king. As regards the second also, the event might have been a past one, but as no other king of Gauḍa but Mahīpāla is referred to in the inscription, the date may be taken as one falling within his rule. For the present, therefore, we may regard Mahīpāla as ruling over Tirhut and probably also up to Benares, about 1026 A.D.[5]

[1] Cf. Ins. Nos. 32-34, found in South Bihar, and No. 35, found in North Bihar.

[2] Cf. Ins. Nos. 15, 17-22, 24-28.

[3] For an account of the monuments referred to in the Ins. cf. *JASB*. N.S. XV. 191.

[4] Cf. *PB*. 76; *BI*. 257.

[5] One historical evidence is usually cited against the conclusion that Mahīpāla's authority extended up to Benares in the year 1026 A.D. The colophon of a Nepal MS. of the *Rāmāyaṇa* refers to the Mahārājādhirāja Puṇyāvaloka Somavaṁśodbhava Gauḍadhvaja Śrīmad-Gāṅgeyadeva as ruling in Tirabhukti (Northern Bihar) in *Saṁvat* 1076. Some scholars identify this Gāṅgeyadeva with the famous Kalachuri king of this name, and hold that his conquests extended up to North Bihar in 1019 A.D. (V.S. 1076). As the Kalachuri records also claim that

Towards the close of his reign, Mahīpāla came into conflict with the powerful Kalachuri ruler Gāṅgeyadeva.[1] The Kalachuri records claim that the latter defeated the ruler of Aṅga,[2] which can only denote Mahīpāla. It also appears from the statement of Baihaqui that Benares was in possession of the Kalachuri king in 1034 A.D. when Ahmad Niyal Tigin invaded it.[3] It may be reasonably concluded, therefore, that shortly after A.D. 1026, Mahīpāla came into conflict with the Kalachuri king Gāṅgeyadeva and suffered reverses in his hands.

Mahīpāla has been criticised by some writers for not having joined the Hindu confederacy organised by the Shāhi kings of the Punjab against Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni. Some have attributed his inactivity to asceticism, and others to intolerance of Hinduism and jealousy to other Hindu kings.[4] It is difficult to subscribe to these views. When Mahīpāla ascended the throne, the Pāla power had sunk to the lowest depths, and the Pāla kings had no footing in their own homeland. It must have taxed the whole energy and strength of Mahīpāla to recover the paternal territories and to ward off the formidable invasions of Rājendra Choḷa and Gāṅgeyadeva. It reflects the greatest credit upon his ability and military genius that he succeeded in re-establishing his authority over a great part of Bengal, and probably also extended his conquests up to Benares. Even this success was due, in a large measure, to the

Gāṅgeyadeva defeated the ruler of Aṅga, the two events are naturally connected, and it is generally concluded that Gāṅgeyadeva defeated Mahīpāla and conquered North Bihar some time before 1019 A.D. As such it is also difficult to believe that Mahīpāla's conquest extended up to Benares in 1026 A.D. It is not generally recognised that the above view also goes counter to the evidence of the Imadpur (Muzaffarpur district) bronze figure inscriptions of Mahīpāla I (No. 35) dated in the year 48. For the 48th regnal year of Mahīpāla could hardly be placed before 1019 A.D. when North Bihar is supposed to have been under Gāṅgeyadeva.

As a matter of fact, the identification of the Gāṅgeyadeva of the Nepal manuscript with the Kalachuri king of that name is open to serious objections, and we cannot build any hypothesis on this basis without further corroborative evidence. This point has been thoroughly discussed by me in *IHQ*. VII. 681, where I have attempted to show that the date 1076 is to be referred to Śaka era (1154 A.D.) when Gaṅgadeva, the successor of Nānyadeva, ruled in North Bihar.

[1] The Gurgi Ins. of Prabodhaśiva seems to refer to a conflict between the Gauḍa king and Kokkalladeva II, the father of Gāṅgeya. But no definite sense can be made out on account of the damaged state of the inscription (*EI*. XXII. 129, f.n. 1).

[2] Goharwa CP. *EI*. XI. 143, v. 17.

[3] The identification of Gang with Gāṅgeyadeva is very probable, though not certain. Cf. *E. & D.* II. 123; Hodivala, *Studies in Indo-Muslim History*, p. 161; *DHNI*. II. 773.

[4] *GR*. 41-43; *BI*. 256.

political circumstances in Northern India, *viz.*, the disastrous and repeated invasions of Sultan Mahmud, which exhausted the strength and resources of the great powers, and diverted their attention to the west. It would have been highly impolitic, if not sheer madness, on the part of Mahīpāla to fritter away his energy and strength in a distant expedition to the west, when his own kingdom was exposed to the threat of disruption from within and invasion from abroad.[1]

On the whole, the achievements of Mahīpāla must be regarded as highly remarkable, and he ranks as the greatest Pāla emperor after Devapāla. He not only saved the Pāla kingdom from impending ruin, but probably also revived to some extent the old imperial dreams. His success in the limited field that he selected for his activities is a sure measure of his prowess and statesmanship, and it is neither just nor rational to regret that he had not done more.

The revival of the Pāla power was also reflected in the restoration of the religious buildings in Benares (including Sārnāth) and Nālandā which had evidently suffered much during the recent collapse of the Pāla power. Reference has already been made to the Sārnāth inscription, which mentions 'hundreds of pious works' and the repairs of the famous Buddhist monuments of old undertaken by the orders of Mahīpāla. Two inscriptions (Nos. 32, 33), dated in the 11th year of Mahīpāla, refer to the restoration and repairs of the monuments of Nālandā after they were destroyed or damaged by fire, and the construction of two temples at Bodh-Gayā. Traditions have associated the name of Mahīpāla with a number of big tanks and towns in North and West Bengal.[2] It is perhaps not without significance, that of all the Pāla emperors, the name of Mahīpāla alone figures in popular ballads still current in Bengal. Bengal has forgotten the names of its great emperors Dharmapāla,

[1] Dr. H. C. Ray generally supports this view (*DHNI.* I. 324; *IHQ.* XV. 507), though his statement that the Pālas were "rulers of a comparatively small principality" does not apply to Mahīpāla. But this does not justify the criticism of Dr. D. C. Ganguly (*IHQ.* XVI. 179). It was not so much the size of the kingdom of Mahīpāla, but its internal condition and external dangers, that account for the inactivity of Mahīpāla. Even according to Dr. Ganguly, Mahīpāla was ruler of North and South Bihar, and North Bengal. A ruler over these territories could easily rank among the other powerful potentates of Northern India about that time, and should have joined the common cause, if his kingdom possessed stability and security which Mahīpāla's kingdom lacked.

[2] The big tank called Mahīpāl-*dīghi* (Dinajpur) and the towns of Mahīpur (Bogra), Mahīsantosh (Dinajpur), and Mahīpāl (Murshidabad), and probably also Sāgardīghi (Murshidabad) are associated with the name of Mahīpāla, cf. *GR.* 41-42.

and Devapāla, but cherished the memory of the king who saved it at a critical juncture.

Before we conclude, reference may be made to two other historical events, the association of Mahīpāla with which is probable, but not certain.

According to the Jaina author Hemachandra, the Chaulukya king Durlabha, who ascended the throne of Anahilapāṭaka about 1009-10 A.D., won over his queen Durlabhadevī in a *svayamvara* ceremony, but, to retain possession of this princess, he had to fight a number of other claimants, amongst whom were the kings of Aṅga, Kāśi, Avanti, Chedi-*deśa*, Kuru-*deśa*, Hūṇa-*deśa*, Mathurā, and Vindhya[1] Now the king of Aṅga, at the end of the tenth and the beginning of the eleventh century, was Mahīpāla I. If, therefore, the Jaina author is to be believed, we have a glimpse of a forgotten episode in the life of Mahīpāla when he was an unsuccessful suitor for the hands of Durlabhadevī. But such stories cannot be taken as historical without independent corroboration.

A manuscript of a drama named *Chaṇḍa-kauśika*, by Ārya Kshemīśvara, was discovered by MM. Haraprasād Śāstrī in 1893.[2] It contains a verse in which king Mahīpāla is said to be an incarnation of Chandragupta, and the Karṇāṭas, of the Nandas, and the play was staged before the king by his order. It is obvious that the poet implied that king Mahīpāla defeated the Karṇāṭas, as Maurya Chandragupta defeated the Nandas. This Mahīpāla has been identified by some scholars with the Pāla king Mahīpāla I, and it has been suggested that the Cholas were referred to as the Karṇāṭas. Mr. R. D. Banerji even went so far as to suggest, on the strength of this evidence, "that though Mahīpāla I was defeated by Rājendra Chola when he crossed into Rāḍhā from East Bengal. he prevented him from crossing the Ganges into Varendra or Northern Bengal, and so the Chola conqueror had to turn back from the banks of the Ganges."[3]

Unfortunately the identification of the king Mahīpāla of *Chaṇḍa-kauśika* with the Pāla ruler Mahīpāla I is not accepted by others, who rather regard the Pratīhāra ruler Mahīpāla as the hero of the drama.[4] In the absence of further particulars, it is difficult to decide the question one way or the other. The probability is, however, undoubtedly in favour of the latter view. For while there is no valid reason to regard Rājendra Chola as a Karṇāta,

[1] *DHNI*. II. 945-46 [2] *JASB*. LXII. 250.
[3] *PB*. 73; *BI*. 251-52.
[4] Prof. K. A. N. Śāstrī in *JOR*. VI. 191-98; *IC*. II. 797. Mr. J. C. Ghosh upholds the view of Mr. Banerji (*IC*. II. 354.).

the Pratīhāra king Mahīpāla undoubtedly had a life and death struggle with the Karṇāṭas under Indra III. It is true that Mahīpāla was defeated, but the retreat of the Karṇāṭa forces and the re-occupation of Kanauj by Mahīpāla could easily be magnified by the court-poet as a glorious victory of Mahīpāla over the Karṇāṭas, and such an assumption was well calculated to soothe the wounded vanity of the Pratīhāras. In any case, it is not safe to derive any inference from *Chaṇḍa-kauśika* regarding the victory of the Pāla ruler over the Choḷa army.

V. THE BREAK-UP OF THE PĀLA KINGDOM

Mahīpāla was succeeded by his son Nayapāla, who ruled for at least fifteen years (*c.* 1038-1055 A.D.).[1] The most important event in his reign was his long-drawn struggle with the Kalachuri king Karṇa or Lakshmīkarṇa. It is evident that the aggressive policy of Gāṅgeyadeva was continued by his son and successor. The Kalachuri records refer, in vague poetic language, to Karṇa's raids against, or encounter with, the chiefs of Vaṅga and Gauḍa.[2] A more detailed account is furnished by the Tibetan texts.[3] They refer to a war between Nayapāla and the Tīrthika king Karṇya (or king of Kárṇya) of the west who had invaded Magadha. There can be hardly any doubt that the latter name stands for Karṇa. As regards the details of the struggle, it seems that at first Karṇa defeated Nayapāla. It is said that failing to capture the city, Karṇa's troops sacked some of the sacred Buddhist institutions, and even carried away a good deal of church furniture. The famous Buddhist monk Dīpaṁkara Śrījñāna (also known as Atīśa) was at that time residing in Magadha, but showed no interest in the struggle that was going on. But, we are told, that 'afterwards when victory turned towards (Nayapāla) and the troops of Karṇa were being slaughtered by the armies of Magadha, he took Karṇa and his men under his protection and sent them away.' Dīpaṁkara then made serious efforts to bring the struggle to an end.

[1] Cf. Ins. Nos. 36-37.

[2] Bheraghat Ins. v. 12 (*EI.* II. 11, 15) ; Karanbel Ins. (*IA.* XVIII. 215, 217). According to v. 23 of the Rewa Stone Ins. (*EI.* XXIV. 112), Karṇa achieved a decisive victory over the king of the Eastern country who probably lost his life in the fierce fight. This point has been discussed in Ch. VII *infra*.

[3] For the Tibetan tradition cf. *JBTS.* I (1893), pp. 9-10; S. C. Das, *Indian Pandits in the Land of Snow,* 51 ; This account, with slight difference in details, is also given in *JASB.* 1891. p. 51. Mr. Das writes 'king of Kárṇya (probably Kánauj).'

"Unmindful of his health even at the risk of his life, Atiśa again and again crossed the rivers that lay between the two kingdoms." His efforts proved successful, and a treaty was concluded between the two hostile kings on the basis of the mutual restitution of all conquests and plunder.

It is difficult to say how far the Tibetan tradition is correct. In particular, the part played by Dīpaṁkara seems to have been exaggerated. But, in view of other evidences, the main outline of the story, *viz.*, an indecisive struggle between Karṇa and Nayapāla, followed by a treaty, may well be taken as historical.

According to Tibetan tradition, Dīpaṁkara left India for good at the age of 59, and spent the last thirteen years of his life in Tibet, dying at the age of 73. The date of his departure has been fixed by various authorities at 1038, 1039, 1040, 1041 and 1042 A.D.[1] As we know, the Kalachuri king Karṇa succeeded his father in 1041 A.D.[2] So even taking the latest date proposed for the departure of Atīśa, it is difficult to reconcile the discrepancy. Perhaps it would be wise not to rely too much on the accuracy of dates derived from Tibetan sources. On the other hand, it is equally likely that the war, referred to in the Tibetan texts, is only a phase of the long-drawn struggle between the Pālas and the Kalachuris which had been going on since the time of Gāṅgeyadeva.

According to the views propounded above, Mahīpāla was in possession of Benares till at least 1026 A.D., but it passed into the hands of the Kalachuri king Gāṅgeya in A.D. 1034. We must, therefore, presume that hostility had broken out before that date, and that it was continued after the death of Gāṅgeya by his son Karṇa. The initial success of the Kalachuris is testified to by the Tibetan tradition, the claim in Kalachuri records that Gāṅgeyadeva defeated the ruler of Aṅga, and the occupation of Benares by the latter. The discomfiture of the Kalachuris towards the end, and their treaty with the Pālas, may have been due, to a great extent, to the death of the great king Gāṅgeyadeva. This theory fits in well with the date of the departure of Dīpaṁkara as given in the Tibetan texts, if we take the latest date proposed *viz.*, 1042 A.D.

In any case, the treaty was merely an interlude, and Karṇa once more directed his arms against the Pālas during the reign of

[1] 1038—*JASB.* 1891, p. 51.
1039—S. C. Das, *Indian Pandits*, 50, 76.
1040—Lévi-*Nepal*, II. 189. *Pag Sam Jon Zang*, Index, p. liv.
1041—*IHQ.* VI. 159.
1042—*JASB.* 1881, p. 237.

[2] This is the generally accepted view, though Mr. J. C. Ghosh places it in 1039 A.D. (*IC.* I. 289).

Vigrahapāla III (*c.* 1055-1070 A.D.), the son and successor of Nayapāla. During the interval he had secured a position of supremacy by destroying the Paramāras and the Chandellas, and conquering the upper valley of the Mahānadī.[1]

The references in Kalachuri records to Karṇa's encounter with the lords of Gauḍa and Vaṅga presumably refer to this second expedition, as the area of the struggle in the first case did not extend beyond Magadha.[2] According to the Kalachuri records, Vaṅga trembled in fear of Karṇa, and the lord of Gauḍa waited upon him.[3] That Karṇa advanced at least up to the border of Western Bengal is proved by his record on a pillar at Pāikor in the district of Birbhum.[4] But according to *Rāmacharita,*[5] Vigrahapāla III defeated Karṇa and married his daughter Yauvanaśrī. Evidently, in this second expedition, too, Karṇa, in spite of initial success, ultimately suffered defeat. Perhaps a peace was concluded, and the alliance was cemented by the marriage of Karṇa's daughter with Vigrahapāla III.

There is hardly any doubt that the king of Gauḍa mentioned in the Kalachuri record refers to the Pāla king. It is not, however, equally certain that the king of Vaṅga also refers to him. We have seen above (*supra* p. 139) that Mahīpāla recovered the possession of East Bengal from the Chandras, but that the latter continued to rule in South Bengal. It is also very likely that East Bengal, or at least a part of it, did not long remain under the Pālas but passed again into the hands of the Chandra kings.[6] These Chandra kings, or the Varmans that succeeded them, might have been ruling in Vaṅga at the time of Karṇa's expedition, though we are not quite sure of it.

There is no doubt also that the Pāla rulers Nayapāla and Vigrahapāla III were gradually losing their hold over Western Bengal. A chief calling himself Mahāmāṇḍalika Īśvaraghosha issued a land-grant, in which he assumed the style of an independent king. The Grant is not dated, but may be referred to the eleventh century A.D., about the time of Vigrahapāla III. He issued the Grant from Dhekkarī, probably situated in Burdwan district.[7]

[1] *DHNI.* II. 779.

[2] The Tibetan tradition definitely asserts that Karṇa invaded only Magadha.

[3] *Cf. supra* p. 144, f.n. 2.

[4] *ASI.* 1921-22, p. 115; *Bīrbhum-vivaraṇa* (Bengali) by H. K. Mukhopādhyāya, II. 9.

[5] I. 9. commentary.

[6] For detailed discussion, see Ch. VII. *infra.*

[7] Rāmganj CP. of Īśvaraghosha, *IB.* 149. Mr. N. G. Majumdar refers it on palaeographical grounds to the eleventh century A.D. It is difficult to accept Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar's view that the year 35 of the Ins. is to be referred to

About the same time we find the rise of the kingdom of Paṭṭikerā in the Tippera district. The existence of Paṭṭikerā as an independent kingdom throughout the second half of the eleventh and the twelfth century A.D. may be inferred from the Burmese chronicles, though unfortunately they do not give any historical account of it.[1]

It thus seems that Eastern Bengal had slipped from the hands of the Pālas and remained a separate independent kingdom, first under the Chandras, and then under the Varmans. There were also other petty independent kingdoms in Bengal.

The Pāla kings, constantly engaged in hostilities with the Kalachuris, could hardly recover their ancient territories in Bengal. The Kalachuri power was crushed towards the close of the third quarter of the eleventh century A.D. by the successive defeats that were inflicted upon Karṇa by his neighbours.[2] But before the Pālas could take advantage of this, they had to face an invasion from the Chālukyas of Karṇāṭa. According to Bilhaṇa,[3] the court-poet of the Chālukyas, the prince Vikramāditya (VI) went out on a career of conquest during the life-time of his father Someśvara I and defeated the kings of Gauḍa and Kāmarūpa, among others. As Someśvara I died before the return of his victorious son, the expedition probably took place not long before 1068 A.D. The Chālukya records refer in a general way to other military expeditions against Bengal during his reign and that of his two predecessors,[4] whose exact nature and amount of success are difficult to determine. But some very important political events coincide chronologically with these Chālukya raids, and are not impossibly direct or indirect consequences of the same. The most notable among these is the establishment of a Karṇāṭa Kshatriya family, the Senas, as the ruling power in Rāḍhā or Western Bengal, and of the Varmans of Siṁhapura, in Vaṅga or Eastern Bengal.

Another foreign invasion of Bengal which may be referred approximately to the middle of the eleventh century A.D., was that

the Chālukya-Vikrama Era (*List of Ins.*, 294). Dhekkarī, the place from which it was issued, has been located in the Burdwan district by MM. H. P. Śāstrī and A. K. Maitra, and in Goālpārā and Kāmarūpa districts of Assam by N. Vasu and N. G. Majumdar. In view of the fact that Dhekkarī was the seat of one of the feudal lords who helped Rāmapāla, the former view is preferable.

[1] For further discussion cf. Ch. IX *infra*.

[2] *DHNI*. II. 780

[3] *Vikramāṅkadeva-charita*, III. 74.

[4] Cf. *Ep. Carn.* Devanagere Taluq Ins. Nos. 2 and 3, and Sudi Ins., *EI*. XV. 86, 97-99, 104. The earliest raid must have taken place before 1053 A.D., for in the Kelawadi Ins. of that year Bhogadevarasa, the general of Someśvara I, claims to have conquered Vaṅga (*EI*. IV. 262). Ācha, a feudatory chief of Vikramāditya, led an expedition to Vaṅga which will be discussed later (see *infra* Ch. VIII).

of the Somavaṁśī ruler of Orissa, named Mahāśivagupta Yayāti. In one of his grants,[1] he states, after enumerating his various conquests, that 'he was cooled by the wind (caused by) profound shaking of the sky of Gauḍa and Rāḍha, and was the full moon in the clear sky of Vaṅga.'[2] These are beautifully vague phrases, and do not enable us to form any definite conclusion, but it seems to refer to some military expeditions against North, West, and East Bengal. The date of Mahāśivagupta Yayāti cannot be determined with any degree of certainty, but he may be placed about the middle of the eleventh century A.D.[3] The king of Orissa was evidently encouraged by the successful expedition of Rājendra Choḷa and disruption of the Pāla empire. There was not perhaps a long interval between his triumphant raid and the Karṇāṭa invasion, and while one facilitated the other, the effect of the two was ruinous to Bengal. Reference may also be made in this connection to another Orissan king, Udyotakeśarī, who claims to have defeated the forces of Gauḍa. The date of Udyotakeśarī is not known, but he probably flourished in the eleventh century A.D.[4]

The series of foreign invasions from the west and the south must have shaken the Pāla kingdom to its very foundations during the reigns of Nayapāla and his son and successor Vigrahapāla III. They had not only lost Eastern, Western, and Southern Bengal, but their power in Magadha was also being gradually reduced to a mere shadow. A clear evidence of this is furnished by four inscriptions found at Gayā. Two of these (Nos. 36, 37), dated in the year 15 of Nayapāla, refer to one Paritosha, his son Śūdraka, and the latter's son, called Viśvāditya in one and Viśvarūpa in the other. Nothing is said in the former to indicate the political importance of the family, but the latter says that Gayā was protected (*paripālita*) for a long time by the strength (*bāhvor-balena*) of Śūdraka. A third inscription (No. 38), dated in the fifth regnal year of Vigrahapāla III, bestows vague grandiloquent praises upon Śūdraka, and says, about Viśvarūpa, that he destroyed all his enemies. The fourth inscription (No. 52) of the family[5] is

[1] Sonpur Grant. *JBORS.* II. 45-59.

[2] Mr. R. D. Banerji attributes the conquest to Mahābhavagupta I (*Orissa,* 212).

[3] *DHNI.* I. 405.

[4] Bhuvaneśvara Ins. *JASB.* VII. 557 ff. Mr. R. D. Banerji refers Udyotakeśarī to the 10th century A.D. (*EI.* XIII. 165), while Mr. B. C. Majumdar places him in the 12th century (*EI.* XII. 239).

[5] There is a fifth inscription of the family (No. 51) which has not yet been fully deciphered. The published portion contains the name of Paritosha, but no historical information.

issued by king Yakshapāla,[1] son of Viśvarūpa. The genealogy begins with Śūdraka, who is said to have defeated his enemies and driven them to the forest. Then follows a very significant, but somewhat obscure, expression about him, *viz.*, "*Śrī-Śūdrakaḥ svayam-apūjayad-indra-kalpo Gauḍeśvaro nṛipati-lakshaṇa-pūjayā-yaṁ.*" Dr. H. C. Ray has taken this expression to mean that the 'Lord of Gauḍa paid homage to Śūdraka.'[2] I think the expression rather means that the lord of Gauḍa formally honoured Śūdraka by investing him as king with proper ceremony. In any case, it shows that at the time the record was composed, the pretensions of the family rose higher than before. This is further proved by the fact that Śūdraka's son Viśvarūpa is now called *nṛipa* or king, and at the very end, where in other inscriptions reference was made to the ruling Pāla king, a wish is expressed that the famous works of Yakshapāla may endure for a long time. A study of these four inscriptions shows the gradual decline of the Pāla power in the Gayā district during the reigns of Nayapāla and Vigrahapāla III.[3]

Thus towards the middle of the eleventh century A.D. the fabric of the Pāla sovereignty was crumbling to dust. Eastern Bengal, West Bengal and Southern Bengal had definitely passed from their hands, and their suzerainty over Magadha was reduced to a mere name. A new power, the Varmans, occupied Eastern Bengal, and a copper-plate of Ratnapāla[4] shows that even Kāmarūpa was hurling defiance at the king of Gauḍa at the beginning or middle of the eleventh century A.D.

VI. DISINTEGRATION AND TEMPORARY REVIVAL

1. *Mahīpāla* II *(1070-75 A.D.)*

Vigrahapāla III had three sons, *viz.*, Mahīpāla II, Śūrapāla II, and Rāmapāla. Mahīpāla, the eldest, succeeded his father. His reign was full of troubles. There were conspiracies against the king, and he was led to believe that his brother Rāmapāla was plotting to seize the kingdom for himself. Accordingly Mahīpāla threw both

[1] The Tibetan historian Tāranātha mentions that Yakshapāla, a son of Rāmapāla, was elected king three years before the latter's death (*Tar.* 251). It illustrates the confused character of the historical tradition preserved by Tāranātha. For while Yakshapāla might have been a contemporary of Rāmapāla during the early part of the reign of the latter, and ruled over a portion of the Pāla territory, he was certainly not the son of Rāmapāla. The fact that Yakshapāla lived in local tradition for five centuries attests to his political importance.

[2] *DHNI.* I. 348.

[3] *DUS.* I. No. 2, pp. 134-35.

[4] Bargaon Grant. *JASB.* LXVII. 115.

Rāmapāla and Śūrapāla into prison. But this did not save either his throne or his life. Ere long he had to face a well-organised rebellion of his vassal chiefs. Mahīpāla's army was ill-equipped, but disregarding the counsel of his advisers he advanced to fight the rebels. He was defeated and killed, and Varendrī passed into the hands of Divya, a high official of the Kaivarta caste.

This revolution and the subsequent recovery of Varendrī by Rāmapāla are described in detail in the contemporary Sanskrit Kāvya *Rāmacharita*.[1] This unique historical document enables us to give a critical account of the history of Bengal for half a century (1070-1120 A.D.) with wealth of details such as are not available in regard to any other period. Unfortunately, the historical value of this book is considerably reduced by the fact that its author, Sandhyākara Nandī, was a partisan of Rāmapāla, and cannot be regarded as an unprejudiced and impartial critic of either Mahīpāla or the Kaivarta chiefs who were enemies of Rāmapāla. While, therefore, the main incidents in the reign of Mahīpāla II, mentioned in *Rāmacharita* and referred to above, may be regarded as historical, we should not accept, without due reservation, the author's descrip-

[1] The unique manuscript of the Sanskrit poem *Rāmacharita* (referred to as *RC*. in the text) was discovered in Nepal in 1897 by the late Mahāmahopādhyāya Paṇḍit Haraprasād Śastrī. The following extracts from his description will give the reader some idea of this important text, the only authentic historical work of ancient Bengal known to us.

"It is a curious work. It is written throughout in double *entendre*....... Read one way, it gives the connected story of the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Read another way, it gives the history of Rāmapāladeva of the Pāla dynasty of Bengal. The story of *Rāmāyaṇa* is known, but the history of Rāmapāla is not known. So it would have been a difficult task to bring out the two meanings distinctly. But fortunately the MS. contained not only the text of the *Rāmacharita*, but a commentary of the first canto and of 36 (*sic*. really 35) verses of the second. The commentary portion of the manuscript then abruptly came to an end. The commentary, as may be expected, gives fuller account of the reign of Rāmapāla than the text......

"The author of the text is Sandhyākara Nandī, who composed the work in the reign of Madanapāla Deva, the second son of Rāmapāla. The author enjoyed exceptional opportunities of knowing the events of Rāmapāla's reign and those of his successors, as his father was the Sāndhivigrahika, or the Minister of Peace and War of Rāmapāla."

The text was first edited by MM. H. P. Śāstrī and published by the Asiatic Society of Bengal (*MASB*. III. No. 1). It was re-edited, with a complete commentary and English translation, by Dr. R. C. Majumdar, Dr. R. G. Basak, and Paṇḍit Nanigopal Banerji, and published by the Varendra Research Society, Rajshahi, in 1939. These two editions will be referred to respectively as *RC*.[1] and *RC*.[2] All quotations from English translation refer to *RC*.[2] For all references to text after II. 35, cf. *RC*.[2], as *RC*.[1] offers no commentary to these verses. For other verses either may be consulted. For a fuller discussion (with references) of the historical facts dealt with in this chapter cf. Introduction to *RC*.[2]

tion of Mahīpāla as hard-hearted (I. 32),[1] not adhering to either truth or good policy (I. 36),[2] and resorting to fraudulent tricks (I. 32, 37); particularly, as in one passage (I. 29), he has referred to Mahīpāla as a good and great king (*rājapravara*).

It is to be noted, however, that there is nothing recorded in *Rāmacharita* to justify the belief, now generally held on the authority of MM. Śāstrī, that Mahīpāla II was an oppressive king, and that specially the 'Kaivartas were smarting under his oppression.'[3] Only two important specific facts, as mentioned above, are noted against him. As regards the first, *viz.*, that he imprisoned his brothers Rāmapāla and Śūrapāla (I. 33), the author has the candour to admit that the king was instigated to this iniquitous act by false reports, sedulously propagated by wicked people, to the effect that Rāmapāla, being an able and popular prince, was scheming to usurp the throne (I. 37). The author, of course, implies that Rāmapāla had really no such intention. But this is a point on which we may not place full confidence on his opinions and statements.

The second charge against Mahīpāla is that he was addicted to warfare (I. 22), and that disregarding the advice of his wise and experienced ministers, he led a small ill-equipped force against the powerful army of the numerous rebel chiefs (*ananta-sāmanta-chakra*) (I. 31). The author has unfortunately omitted all details by which we could judge of the actions of the king. He does not say, for example, what was the alternative policy suggested by the experienced ministers; and considering the part played by high officials like Divya, Mahīpāla may certainly be excused for not putting implicit faith in their advice. On the whole, it is impossible, from the brief and scattered references in *Rāmacharita*, to form an accurate idea either of the reign or of the character of Mahīpāla II. It is, no doubt, true that he succumbed to a revolt of his feudatory chiefs. This does not, however, necessarily mean, and *Rāmacharita* does not support the contention in any way, that the king was particularly wicked and oppressive to his people, far less that his personal character or policy was the direct or indirect cause of the revolt.

It is far more probable that this revolt, like other revolts in the Pāla kingdom about the same time, was the effect of the

[1] The figures within brackets refer to cantos and verses of *RC*.

[2] The actual reading of the commentary is '*bhūtaṁ satyaṁ nayo nītaṁ tayorarakshane yuktaḥ prasaktaḥ*.' But MM. Śāstrī emended the text by omitting one '*ra*' in '*tayorarakshane*' which gives just the opposite meaning. There is no justification for this change, as the context of the passage supports the actual reading.

[3] *RC.*[1] 13.

weakness of the central authority and the general tendency of disruption in different parts of the kingdom. That king Mahīpāla II could not rise equal to the occasion, and his personal gifts were not sufficient to enable him to pass safely through the crisis, admit of no doubt. But there is nothing to support the view that, judged by the ordinary standard, he was a particularly bad king, or that he was in any way specially responsible for the fall of the Pāla kingdom. As against this opinion, which is now generally held, the extant evidence would in no way militate against the contention that Mahīpāla II was perhaps a victim to circumstances over which he had no control, and that, as a king, he was more sinned against than sinning.

2. *Varendrī under the Kaivarta chiefs*

The part played by the Kaivarta chief Divya[1] in the revolution that cost Mahīpāla his life and throne is by no means quite clear. From one passage in *Rāmacharita* (I. 38), it seems very likely that Divya was a high official under Mahīpāla. There is no specific reference in *Rāmacharita* that he headed the rebellion of the feudatory chiefs, or even took part in their encounter with Mahīpāla. Yet it is expressly mentioned that the Kaivarta king occupied a major portion of the kingdom after having killed king Mahīpāla (I. 29). Further light is thrown on this episode by the verse I. 38. It says that Varendrī, the ancestral home of the Pālas, was seized by Divya, who was a *dasyu* and *upadhi-vratī*. The interpretation of the latter phrase has given rise to much controversy. The commentary explains *vrata* as some action undertaken as an obligatory duty, and then adds, *chhadmani vratī*. *Chhadman*, like *upadhi*, means 'plea, pretext, fraud, dishonesty, trick' *etc*., and the natural interpretation of the two qualifying epithets is that Divya was really a villain, though he pretended that his actions were inspired by a sense of duty. In other words, though his real motive in rising against the king was nothing but ambition and self-aggrandisement, he hid it under the cloak of a patriotic action. According to the other interpretation, Divya was not a rebel at heart, but had to pretend to act as such from a paramount sense of duty. The first interpretation appears to be more fair and reasonable, and is supported by the epithet '*dasyu*' which hardly fits in with the second.

[1] The name is written variously in *RC*. as Divya (I. 38), Divvoka (I. 38-39 commentary) and Divoka (I. 31 comm.).

It seems to be quite clear from this passage as well as the scattered references throughout the first canto of *Rāmacharita,* that its author regarded Divya as an evil-doer, and his seizure of the throne as a rebellion, pure and simple.[1] We could hardly expect any other view from the court-poet and a loyal official of the Pālas, and probably the author unduly exaggerated the faults and shortcomings of the enemy. It is quite likely that a writer, belonging to Divya's party, would have represented him in a more favourable light. But the fact remains that the *Rāmacharita,* the only evidence at present available to us, does not in any way support the view, sedulously propagated by a section of writers in Bengal, that Divya was prompted to seize the throne by the highly patriotic motive of saving the country from the oppressions of the ruling king, or that like Gopāla, the founder of the Pāla dynasty, he was called to the throne by the united voice of the people to save them in a great crisis.[2] In spite of strong popular sentiments to the contrary, we are bound to presume, until further evidence is available, that like so many other rebels in all ages and countries, Divya, a highly placed officer of State, took advantage of the weakness of the central authority, the confusion in the kingdom, and perhaps also of dissensions among the royal brothers, to kill his master and king, and seize the throne for himself. There is no need to invent pretexts, or to offer excuses, for an act which was in that age neither unusual nor regarded as unnatural.[3]

As already noted above, *Rāmacharita* is silent on the point whether Divya actually joined the rebellion of the feudal chiefs. The natural inference is, of course, that he was the leader of this rebellion which proved successful and gave him the throne. It is,

[1] Thus v. I. 12 refers to the Kaivarta chief as 'bad king' (*kutsita inaḥ Kaivarta-nripaḥ*) ; v. I. 24 refers to unholy or unfortunate civil revolution (*anīkaṁ dharma-viplavaṁ*) ; and v. I. 27 describes the affray or disturbance (*damaraṁ*) caused by the enemy as a world calamity (*bhavasya āpadaṁ*).

[2] A movement was recently set on foot by a section of the Kaivarta or Māhishya community in Bengal to perpetuate the memory of Divya, on the basis of the view-points noted above. They refused to regard him as a rebel, and held him up as a great hero called to the throne by the people of Varendrī to save it from the oppressions of Mahīpāla II. An annual ceremony, *Divya-smriti-utsava,* was organised by them, and the speeches made on these occasions by eminent historians like Sir Jadunath Sarkar, Rai Bahadur Rama Prasad Chanda, and Dr. Upendra Nath Ghoshal, who presided over these functions, sought to support the popular views (cf. *Bhāratavarsha,* 1342, pp. 18 ff). This movement died a natural death within a few years.

[3] For a detailed discussion of this point, and a view of Divya's rebellion in its true perspective, cf. Dr. R. C. Majumdar's article '*The Revolt of Divvoka against Mahīpāla* II *and other revolts in Bengal*' (*DUS.* I. No. 2, pp. 125 ff).

however, also not improbable, that he played a waiting game, and as soon as the army of Mahīpāla was worsted in the battle-field, he boldly seized the throne and killed the king. Whatever view may be correct, there is no doubt that Mahīpāla met his death in the hands of Divya, and not during the reign of his nephew Bhīma, as has been upheld by some.[1]

After his accession to the throne, Divya probably came into conflict with Jātavarman, king of Eastern Bengal. The Belāva copper-plate of Bhojavarman claims that 'Jātavarman brought to disgrace the strength of the arms of Divya.'[2] It is impossible to come to any definite conclusion from such an isolated reference, beyond the obvious fact that the two independent kingdoms of Varendrī and Vaṅga were hostile to each other.

Of the activities of Divya, after he had usurped the throne, *Rāmacharita* tells us very little. But the fact that three members of the family ruled in succession (I. 39) shows that Divya made his position quite secure in Varendrī. Not only did Rāmapāla's efforts to recover Varendrī prove futile (I. 40-41), but even his own dominions seem to have been invaded by Divya or his partisans (Ins. No 46, v. 15). These prove that Divya was an able and powerful ruler. He was succeeded by his younger brother Rudoka, but nothing is known of him.

The next king Bhīma,[3] the son and successor of Rudoka, is highly praised as a ruler by the author of *Rāmacharita*. He devotes seven verses (II. 21-27) to a very flattering description of the personal virtues of Bhīma and the riches and strength of his kingdom. It is not, however, easy to reconcile all these praises with the statement that Varendrī was oppressed with cruel taxation before Rāmapāla's conquest (III. 27), and, therefore, presumably in the reign of Bhīma. On the whole, we may reasonably conclude that Bhīma restored peace and prosperity (I. 39) after the period of turmoil that must have accompanied or followed the expulsion of the Pālas, and that the Kaivarta rulers had built up their new kingdom on a strong foundation.[4]

[1] Cf. Dr. U. N. Ghoshal's Presidential Address at the *Divya-smṛiti-utsava*, p. 19. It is true that verse I. 29 of *RC.* does not name the Kaivarta king who murdered Mahīpāla. But verse 15 of the Manahali CP. (Ins. No. 46) proves that Divya was alive after Rāmapāla had ascended the throne, *i.e.*, after the death of Rāmapāla's elder brothers Mahīpāla and Śūrapāla. The Kaivarta *king*, who murdered Mahīpāla, according to *RC.* (I. 29), must, therefore, be Divya, and not Bhīma who was not a *king* at that time.

[2] *IB.* 14; also *infra* p. 198.

[3] The expression '*yathokta-krameṇa*' in the commentary to I. 39 proves that Divya, Rudoka, and Bhīma ruled in unbroken succession.

[4] The name of Bhīma has been preserved in local tradition. A rampart near

While Bhīma was busy consolidating his dominions in Varendrī, preparations were going on beyond his frontier which ultimately overwhelmed him and destroyed the fortunes of his family.

3. *The reign of Rāmapāla*

It has been noted above that Rāmapāla and his elder brother Śūrapāla were both in prison when Mahīpāla II was defeated by the rebellious chiefs. What became of them after this catastrophe is not expressly stated. MM. Śāstrī's statement that "they were rescued by their friends,"[1] presumably even before the revolution, is not borne out by *RC*. It is clear, however, that somehow or other they managed to escape and leave Varendrī. Although there is no subsequent reference to Śūrapāla in *RC*., it is clear from v. 14 of the Manahali copper-plate of Madanapāla (No. 46) that Śūrapāla ascended the throne. Of the events of his reign we know nothing. But the silence of *RC*. about Śūrapāla's later history does not justify the assumption made by R. D. Banerji that he was murdered by Rāmapāla.[2] All that we may reasonably infer is that Śūrapāla played no part in the great task of recovering Varendrī, which devolved, after his death, upon his younger brother Rāmapāla who succeeded him.

After the usurpation of the throne of Varendrī by Divya, Rāmapāla (and presumably also his elder brother Śūrapāla) ruled over the remaining part of the Pāla kingdom, which probably included at first parts of Magadha and Rāḍhā, and was later confined to Vaṅga or a part of it.[3]

For some time, Rāmapāla remained inactive, unable to adopt any effective means to recover Varendrī (I. 40). But then some new danger arose, and after consultation with his sons and ministers, he resolved on firm and prompt action (I. 42). The exact nature of this new danger is not disclosed in *RC*., but perhaps it refers to Divya's campaigns against Rāmapāla referred to above. It was

Bogra is still known as *Bhīmer Jāṅgāl*. MM. Śāstrī held the view (*RC*.[1] 13) that Bhīma 'built a Damara, a suburban city, close to the capital of the Pāla empire.' The only foundation for this statement is the expression wrongly read by him as '*ḍamaram-upapuraṁ*' in the commentary to I. 27. The expression, as correctly read in *RC*.,[2] *viz.*, '*ḍamaram-upaplavaṁ*,' shows that there is no reference to any city, far less to any capital city, founded by Bhīma, as Mr. R. D. Banerji imagined (*PB*. 91; *BI*. 291).

[1] *RC*.[1] 13. [2] *BI*. 280.

[3] Cf. *RC*.[2] XXIII. where evidences are discussed with full references. The colophon of a MS. proves the rule of Rāmapāla in Magadha in his 25th regnal year (Sastri-*Cat*. I. 163).

probably the danger of losing even the remaining part of his kingdom that forced Rāmapāla to activity.[1]

In sheer despair Rāmapāla begged for help in all possible quarters. The proud inheritor of the throne of Dharmapāla and Devapāla literally travelled from door to door with a view to enlisting the sympathy and support of the powerful chiefs who were formerly, and many of whom still nominally, his vassal chiefs (I. 43). His efforts proved successful. By a lavish offer of land and enormous wealth, he gained over to his side a number of powerful chiefs who possessed well-equipped forces (I. 45). The detailed list of these independent or semi-independent chiefs of Bengal, contained in *RC.*,[2] must be regarded as of utmost historical importance. Apart from giving us an accurate idea of the strength of Rāmapāla in that supreme hour of trial, this list of *de facto* independent chiefs furnishes a vivid and interesting picture of the political dismemberment of Bengal caused by the decline of the power and authority of the Pālas.

Foremost among Rāmapāla's allies was his maternal uncle Mathana, better known as Mahaṇa, the Rāshṭrakūṭa chief who joined Rāmapāla with his two sons, Mahāmāṇḍalika Kāhṇaradeva and Suvarṇadeva, and his brother's son Mahāpratīhāra Śivarājadeva. Next in point of importance was Bhīmayaśas, the king of Pīṭhī and lord of Magadha. The exact location of Pīṭhī is not known but it was certainly in Bihar.[3] Of the other allied chiefs that joined Rāmapāla in his expedition against Varendrī, *Rāmacharita* specifically mentions only the following:

1. Vīraguṇa, king[4] of Koṭāṭavī in the south.[5]

[1] The new danger might also refer to the invasion of the Paramāra king Lakshmadeva who ruled some time before A.D. 1097, the earliest known date of his successor (*DHNI.* II. 882). It is said that "desirous of capturing matchless elephants he first proceeded to Hari's quarter (*i.e.* the east)," and "then, just as dread, entered the town of the Lord of Gauḍa" (v. 38, *EI.* II. 186, 192). It is not certain whether he entered Gauḍa (which was then probably in possession of Divya or Bhīma), or the capital city of Rāmapāla, who bore the title, or at least was known as, the lord of Gauḍa. In any case, we cannot say anything about the nature and result of this raid by the Paramāra king.

[2] *RC.* II. 5, 6, 8. The text gives the names in a very cryptic form. These would not have been intelligible but for the commentary, which not only gives the full name of each king and the locality of his kingdom, but also adds some historical details in many cases. For a full discussion of these cf. *RC.*[2] pp. XXV-XXVIII, which also give references to authorities for the brief statements made in the text.

[3] Cf. ch. IX § 3 *infra.*

[4] The word 'king' is used where the commentary expressly mentions any royal epithet. In other cases the word 'ruler' has been used.

[5] Koṭa may be identified with Koṭeśvara to the east of Vishṇupur. *Ain-i-Akbari* refers to Mahal Koṭ-des (Transl. II. 144). According to Beames, it

2. Jayasiṁha, king of Daṇḍabhukti (Midnapur district).
3. Vikramarāja, ruler of Bāla-Balabhī.[1]
4. Lakshmīśūra, lord of Apara-Mandāra (Hooghly district),[2] and head of the group of feudal chiefs of the forest (*samast-āṭavika-sāmanta-chakra-chūḍāmaṇi*).
5. Śūrapāla, ruler of Kujavaṭī (about 14 miles north of Nayādumkā in Santal Parganas).[3]
6. Rudraśikhara, ruler of Tailakampa (Manbhum district).[4]
7. Bhāskara or Mayagalasiṁha, king of Uchchhāla.[5]
8. Pratāpasiṁha, king of Ḍhekkarīya (Ḍhekuri near Katwa in the Burdwan district).[6]
9. Narasiṁhārjuna, king of Kayaṅgala-maṇḍala (south of Rājmahal).[7]

was a large *parganā* in the northern and central part of Puri (*JRAS*. 1896, p. 762). The former identification seems more likely.

[1] MM. H. P. Śāstrī identified it with Bāgḍī (*RC*.[1] 14). Bāla-Balabhī, according to *RC*., was close to Devagrāma which is located by N. Vasu in Nadiyā (*VJI*. 198). *Ain-i-Akbari* mentions 'Deul' which is identified by Beames with the ancient stone fort of Deulgāon on the boundary of the districts of Midnapur and Balasore. If this Deulgāon represents ancient Devagrāma, we may find in the *parganā* of Bibli (also referred to in *Ain-i-Akbari*) a contracted form of old Bāla-Balabhī. Bibli has been identified with Pipli, the site of the earliest English factory in Bengal, at the mouth of the Suvarṇarekhā river (*JRAS*. 1896, pp. 746, 752).

[2] Mandāra has been identified with *sarkar* Madāran, locally called Mandāran. It comprised, according to Beames, "a very long straggling strip of territory running from Birbhum in the North to the junction of the Hooghly and Rupnārāyan rivers in the South" (*JRAS*. 1896, p. 106). Mandāran is now known as Bhitargarh Mandāran (for Blochman's identification, cf. *Proc. ASB*. 1870, p. 117), about seven miles west of the town of Jahanabad or Arambagh on the Darkeswar river. De Barro's map (c. 1550 A.D.) shows Mandaram as an important city on a branch of the Ganges river, almost due south of Saptagrām. According to Beames, a local Paṇḍit derives the name from *Manda* (bad) and *aranya* (forest). Apara-Mandāra has also been interpreted as on the other side of Mandāra, the famous hill about 30 miles south of Bhagalpur (*IA*. 1930, p. 244).

[3] G. Mitra, *Bīrbhūmer Itihāsa*, I. 59.

[4] Identified with Telkupi. The region is still known as Sikharbhum, perhaps after the royal family (*VJI*. 199). *Ain-i-Akbari* refers to the *parganā* Shergarh, commonly called Sakharbhum. Beames identifies it with Sikharbhumi, "an immense *parganā* occupying the whole western angle of Burdwan between the Dāmodar and Ajay rivers" (*JRAS*. 1896, pp. 106-7).

[5] This has been identified with 'Jam Ujhial,' a *parganā* in Birbhum (*VJI*. 199). Mr. R. D. Banerji objects to this identification on the ground that there are many other *parganās* called Ujhial (*BI*. 289-90), a fact already pointed out by Beames, who takes the word to mean 'high land' (*JRAS*. 1896, p. 93).

[6] *BI*. 290. The location of Dhekkarī in Assam, originally propounded by Mr. N. Vasu, and supported by Mr. N. G. Majumdar (*IB*. 150) is less likely.

[7] The old town of Kānkjol lies near the East Indian Railway line about 20 miles south of Rājmahal. For a detailed account cf. Beames in *JRAS*. 1896, p. 96.

10. Chaṇḍārjuna of Saṅkaṭagrāma.[1]
11. Vijayarāja of Nidrāvalī.[2]
12. Dvorapavardhana, ruler of Kauśāmbī (Rajshahi or Bogra district).[3]
13. Soma of Paduvanvā.[4]

In addition to Mahaṇa, Bhīmayaśas, and the thirteen rulers mentioned above, Rāmapāla was joined by other allied chiefs whose names are not given (II. 6). An analysis of the list shows that, leaving aside the localities whose identity is unknown or doubtful, almost all the allies of Rāmapāla belonged to South Bihar and South-West Bengal.

If the identification of Kauśāmbī with Kusumbi in either Rajshahi or Bogra be accepted, we must hold that Rāmapāla's diplomacy succeeded in attaching isolated chiefs, even of Varendrī, to his side. This must have proved disastrous to the cause of Bhīma, as he was now liable to attack from within. Besides, it proves that Varendrī did not solidly stand by him, and there was disruption within the newly founded kingdom.

Being joined by the large and well-equipped forces of the confederate chiefs, consisting of cavalry, elephants, and infantry, Rāmapāla felt strong enough to make an attempt towards the recovery of Varendrī. He despatched a force under his Mahāpratīhāra, the Rāshṭrakūṭa Śivarāja, which crossed the Ganges and devastated Varendrī (I. 47-49). There is no reference to any pitched battle, but presumably the frontier guards of Bhīma were defeated, and the way was made clear for the crossing of the main force (I. 50).

As soon as Śivarāja reported to Rāmapāla that his army had occupied the frontier posts, the entire force of Rāmapāla crossed

[1] *Ain-i-Akbari* refers to the *parganā* 'Sakot' in *sarkar* Satgaon. The name 'Sakot' resembles 'Saṅkaṭa,' but Beames emends the former as Siguna (*JRAS*. 1896, p. 104). Saṅkaṭagrāma is probably the same as Saṁka-koṭa, referred to in *Vallāla-charita* (II. 4) and Sankanāt referred to in *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī* (cf. Ch. VIII. App. II, III).

[2] Cf. *RC*.[2] XXVII.

[3] Mr. R. D. Banerji identifies it with the "modern *parganā* of Kusumba in the Rajshahi district." (*JASB*. N.S. X. 125). But it may also be identified with the *parganā* Tappe Kusumbi in the Bogra district.

[4] MM. Śāstrī doubtfully identifies Paduvanvā with Pabna (*RC*.[1] 14), but there is no evidence in support of it, except the similarity of the two names. Reference may be made to *parganā* Paunan in the Hooghly district (Hunter, III. 416). The name Paunan may be easily derived from Paduvanvā.

Similarly, Paduvanvā resembles Pāodumbā, a village mentioned in a manuscript of *Kṛishṇa-prema-taraṅginī* of Bhāgavatāchārya, dated Śaka 1620 (=1698 A.D.), and preserved in the Dacca University. This village Pāodumbā, is said to be in '*pargane* Bijanagar' and '*sarkar* Panjara.' Bijanagar is mentioned as a *parganā* of *sarkar* Pinjora or Panjara (*Ain*. III. 136) and comprised the greater part of Dinajpur district (*JASB*. XLII. 215; Hunter, VII. 437, 449).

the Ganges by means of a flotilla of boats, and safely reached the "northern bank" (II. 9-11). The express reference in *RC.* to the "northern bank" seems to show that Rāmapāla proceeded from his base in Central or Southern Bengal, and crossed the Padmā. This supports the view, mentioned above, that at the time of this expedition, Vaṅga was the chief stronghold of Rāmapāla's power. But the considerable shiftings of the courses of the Ganges and the Padmā rivers preclude any definite conclusion.[1]

After Rāmapāla had crossed the Ganges with his huge army, Bhīma opposed him, and a pitched battle took place. The tumultuous battle which is described in nine verses (II. 12-20) was conducted with vigour and ferocity on each side. Both Bhīma and Rāmapāla took a very active part in it, and kept close to each other (II. 14). But 'by an evil turn of destiny,' Bhīma, seated on his elephant, was taken prisoner. This decided the fate of the battle. Bhīma's army fled and his camp was plundered by the 'unrestrained soldiers' of Rāmapāla (II. 29-30). But shortly after the capture of Bhīma, his forces were rallied by his friend Hari, who put up a valiant fight and at first scored some successes (II. 38ff). But Rāmapāla's son, who was put in charge of the fight, "exhausted the golden pitchers by his war-time gifts" (II. 43), and evidently managed to create some discord between Hari and Bhīma's followers which caused obstruction to each other (II. 41). Finally, Hari was won over.[2] This sealed the fate of Bhīma's army, and the whole of his kingdom lay prostrate before Rāmapāla.

After having crushed this rising, Rāmapāla wreaked a terrible vengeance upon Bhīma. Bhīma was taken to the place of execution where important members of his family were killed before his very eyes. Then Bhīma himself was killed by means of a 'multitude of arrows' (II. 45-49).[3] Thus ended the life of Bhīma and the rebellion in Varendrī.

After the final collapse of the forces of Bhīma, Rāmapāla took possession of his immense riches, and "occupied after a long time the dearest land of Varendrī" (III. 1). His first task was, of course, the restoration of peace and order. We learn from *RC.*, that in addition to the insecurity of life and property caused by the late troubles, the country was suffering from heavy and oppressive taxation (III. 27). Rāmapāla reduced the taxation, promoted cultivation, constructed great works of public utility, and introduced

[1] Cf. *supra* pp. 3 ff.

[2] This account radically differs from the version of MM. H. P. Śāstrī. For full discussion cf. *RC.*[2] xxx-xxxi.

[3] For Rāmapāla's conduct towards Bhīma, cf. *RC.*[2] xxix-xxx.

regular administration. The country was rid of the frightful rule; the (wholesale) massacre and arson caused by the enemies was removed; and the land, being brought under cultivation, flourished.[1] Rāmapāla left the cares of government to his son (or sons) who, acting under his orders, maintained good government and restored internal order.[2]

Rāmapāla fixed his capital at Rāmāvatī.[3] Whether the city was founded by him, or he improved an already existing place, is not quite clear. The *RC.* gives a long description of its beauty and splendour,[4] and it appears from later records (No. 46) that the city continued to be the capital of the Pālas till the end.

After having consolidated his power in Varendrī, Rāmapāla made an attempt to re-establish the old glory of the dynasty by subjugating neighbouring territories in the east and south. The *RC.* tells us (III. 44) that Rāmapāla was propitiated by a Varman king of the East for the latter's own protection (or deliverance), and presented by him with an elephant and his own chariot. This Varman king must have belonged to the well-known dynasty ruling in East Bengal with Vikramapura as capital.[5]

Rāmapāla also carried his conquests further and brought Kāmarūpa under his control. The victorious campaign was evidently led by an allied or feudal chief who was greatly honoured by Rāmapāla (III. 47). The vanquished king of Assam was probably Dharmapāla.[6]

[1] Cf. *RC.*[2] III. 27, 31, 42.

[2] *RC.* IV. 1-3. The expression *sūnu-samarpita-rājya* might refer to one or more sons: V. 6 also refers to Rājyapāla and his brother.

[3] See *supra* p. 32.

[4] For the erroneous character of MM. Śāstrī's views in this respect, cf. *RC.*[2] XXXI.

[5] The history of the Varman dynasty has been discussed in ch. VII. The Varman king, referred to in *RC.* is probably Harivarman, and it is tempting to identify him with the chief Hari, the great friend of Bhīma, who rallied the forces of the latter after his defeat, and fought stubbornly with Rāmapāla. Reference is made to a chief called Hari in a subsequent verse of *RC.*, and it is very reasonable to hold that the same person is referred to. It would then appear that after the death of Bhīma, Rāmapāla won over Hari (now called *īśa* or king) to his side, and established him in a position of great influence (III. 32). We are further told that the two kings, meaning presumably Rāmapāla and Hari, both of whom were rich in cavalry and very powerful, met together in Rāmāvatī and shone for a long time in each other's close embrace (III. 39-40). But although the identification appears plausible, there is no definite evidence in support of it.

[6] In the absence of a fairly accurate knowledge of the chronology of the kings of Kāmarūpa, it is impossible to say, with any degree of certainty, who was ruling in Kāmarūpa about this time. Hoernle assigned Ratnapāla to the first half of the eleventh century A.D. (*JASB.* LXVII. 102 ff), and if this view is accepted,

Rāmapāla also tried to expand his power in the south. The task was no doubt facilitated by the fact that the feudatory chiefs of Rāḍhā had rallied to his standard, and were evidently attached to his cause. Presumably with their help, he invaded Orissa and extended his conquests up to Kaliṅga.[1] Orissa was at that time in a state of political disintegration. The later Eastern Gaṅga kings of Kaliṅga were trying to expand their dominions in the north. King Devendravarman Rājarāja claims to have conquered Oḍradeśa

Dharmapāla may be regarded as the contemporary of Rāmapāla (*Kām. Śās.* 146). For other views, cf. *IHQ.* XII. 630.

The Silimpur Stone Ins. (*EI.* XIII. 283) refers to king Jayapāla of Kāmarūpa (v. 22) whose name is not included in the official list of kings of Kāmarūpa (*Kām. Śās.* 146 ff). He may be the unknown allied king, who conquered Kāmarūpa for Rāmapāla. But it is also not impossible that the 'highly honoured' Tiṁgyadeva, whose revolt is referred to in the Kamauli Grant (No. 50), was the allied king and conqueror of Kāmarūpa. MM. Śāstrī's view that Mayana was the name of this conqueror (*RC.*[1] 15) is due to an error in the reading of the text (*RC.*[2] XXXIII).

[1] The incident is referred to in a verse (III. 45) which runs as follows:—

"He (Rāmapāla) did favour to the vanquished king of Utkala, who was born in the lineage of the ornament of Bhava (Śiva) (*Bhava-bhūshaṇa-santati*), and rescued the whole world (from the terror of) Kaliṅga, after having extirpated those robbers (of that place)."

The expression 'ornament of Śiva,' which denotes the family to which the vanquished king of Utkala belonged, has been variously interpreted, inasmuch as Nāga (serpent), Soma (moon), or Gaṅgā, which are the family-names of well-known ruling dynasties, may all be regarded as the ornaments of Śiva. H. P. Śāstrī took the first meaning and held that Rāmapāla conquered Utkala and restored it to the Nāgavaṁśīs (*RC.*[1] 15). Mr. R. D. Banerji accepted this view (*BI.* 293). Mr. N. G. Majumdar accepted this meaning of *Bhava-bhūshaṇa*, but interpreted the verse in an altogether different way. He translated it as follows: "Rāmapāla favoured (or reinstated) the vanquished king of Utkala who possessed the territory of a *Bhava-bhūshaṇa-santati* (*i.e.*, the Nāgas)." He held that this king of Utkala was either Harivarman or his son who had overthrown the Nāga king and made himself master of Utkala (*IB.* 30).

The Nāgavaṁśī kings are known from epigraphic records to have ruled in Bastar State in the Central Provinces, and possibly these kings are referred to in *RC.* III. 43 as having been defeated by Rāmapāla. It seems to refer to 'Bhogāli' as the territory of the Nāgas, and the lexicographer Hemachandra refers to Bhogāvalī as the Nāga capital. The inscriptions of the kings ruling in Bastar State at the beginning of the twelfth century A.D. call them '*Nāgavaṁśodbhava Bhogavatī-pura-var-eśvara*' (*EI.* IX. 160 ff; X. 25 ff.). The Nāgavaṁśī kings are not, however, known to have ruled in Orissa proper, *i.e.*, the territory between the river Suvarṇarekhā and the Chilka Lake. The Nāgavaṁśī king Someśvaradeva, who ruled at the beginning of the twelfth century A.D., refers to the king of Uḍra as a rival (*EI.* X. 26). It is, therefore, more reasonable to hold that the king of Utkala, defeated by Rāmapāla, belonged to the Somavaṁśī dynasty which is known to have been ruling in Orissa in the eleventh century A.D. (*DHNI.* I. 393 ff.). One of the Somavaṁśī rulers, Mahāśivagupta Yayāti, as noted above (p. 148) claims to have raided Gauḍa and Rāḍhā. One of the last kings of this dynasty is named Udyotakeśarī, and this dynasty is probably to be

some time before 1075 A.D.[1] Evidently the conquest of Orissa was not complete, for his son, the famous Anantavarman Choḍagaṅga (1076-1147 A.D.), replaced the fallen lord of Utkala, some time before 1112 A.D.,[2] and claims in an inscription, dated 1118 A.D.,[3] to be decorated with the rank of entire sovereignty over the whole of Utkala. It appears, however, that Orissa was not finally conquered and annexed to the Eastern Gaṅga empire till shortly before 1135 A.D., for in an inscription[4] dated in that year, Anantavarman refers to his newly made conquests of three quarters including Utkala. It is probable that shortly after this he removed his capital to the city of Cuttack in Orissa.[5]

While the Eastern Gaṅgas were thus steadily encroaching upon Orissa from the south, that hapless country was also exposed to attacks from the north. We know from *Rāmacharita* that Jayasiṁha, king of Daṇḍabhukti, had defeated Karṇakeśarī, king of Utkala, before he joined Rāmapāla in his expedition against Bhīma. Rāmapāla's conquest of Utkala might have been a continuation of the old campaign, and was undoubtedly facilitated by the success of his allied feudal chief. But it is also not unlikely that his invasion of Utkala was inspired by the dread of the rapidly growing power of the Eastern Gaṅgas. Subsequent conquests of Anantavarman Choḍagaṅga right up to the bank of the Ganges[6] show that Rāma-

identified with the Keśarī dynasty which, according to *Mādlā-pañjī* or the Chronicles of Orissa, ruled in that kingdom till it was conquered by Choḍagaṅga in 1132 A.D. The *RC.* refers to a king of Utkala named Karṇakeśarī who was defeated by Jayasiṁha, king of Daṇḍabhukti and an ally of Rāmapāla (II. 6). This definitely proves the rule of Keśarī kings in Orissa during the reign of Rāmapāla. According to *Mādlā-pañjī*, Suvarṇakeśarī, the last ruler of this line, was on the throne between *c.* 1123-32 A.D. Mr. N. N. Das Gupta even goes so far as to assert that the *Bhava-bhūshaṇa* of *RC.* means Keśarī dynasty, as the serpents are but the *Keśara* or mane of Śiva (*IA.* LIX. 244). According to Mr. R. P. Chanda, the king of Utkala referred to in *RC.* was Choḍagaṅga of the Gaṅga dynasty which traced its descent from the moon (*GR.* 51).

[1] Dīrghasi Ins., v. 5. *EI.* IV. 314 ff.

[2] Korni CP. *JAHRS.* I. 118 ff.

[3] Vizagapatam CP. *IA.* XVIII. 165 ff.

[4] Śrī-Kūrmam Ins. *SII.* V. No. 1335; quoted by R. Subba Rao (*JAHRS.* VII. 57, 59, 64).

[5] The *Mādlā-pañjī* states that Choḍagaṅga defeated the last king of the Keśarī dynasty Suvarṇakeśarī in A.D. 1134, and succeeded to the Utkala kingdom and transferred his capital to Cuttack (quoted by R. Subba Rao, *JAHRS.* VII. 57). According to Fleet's version, Choḍagaṅga's conquest took place in 1132 A.D. (*EI.* III. 336).

[6] According to Śrī-Kūrmam Ins. (*SII.* V. No. 1335), dated 1135 A.D., Anantavarman Choḍagaṅga returned in that year to his capital after subduing the Western, Northern, and Eastern countries, and bringing the whole country lying between the Ganges and the Godāvarī rivers under his firm control (*JAHRS.* VII.

pāla's apprehensions were not probably without some reasonable foundations. As Anantavarman Choḍagaṅga and Rāmapāla both claim to have favoured or re-instated the lord of Utkala, it is not difficult to infer that Orissa was only a pawn in a bigger game, and that the two rival kings tried to thwart each other's ambition by putting up their protégés on the throne of Orissa. It may be surmised from what has been said above that Rāmapāla's protégé was a Somavaṁśī Keśarī king. Evidently this Keśarī king had been defeated by Rājarāja Devendravarman, *c.* 1075 A.D., and replaced by a nominee of the latter. Some time later Rāmapāla helped the defeated king (or his successor) and re-instated him. About 1112 A.D. Anantavarman Choḍagaṅga again replaced the old king, set up by his father, or his successor.

In this way the duel between the Pāla and Eastern Gaṅga kings was carried on at the expense of the unfortunate kingdom of Orissa. It was not perhaps till after the death of Rāmapāla that the Gaṅga king succeeded in finally conquering Orissa and annexing it to his dominions. For, according to *Rāmacharita,* Rāmapāla protected the whole country right up to Kaliṅga by destroying the *niśācharas.*[1] In this word *niśāchara,* which means thief or '*chora,*' there may be a veiled allusion to the Gaṅga king Choḍa-Gaṅga. Rāmapāla was undoubtedly helped in his task of keeping the Gaṅga king in check by the serious danger in which the latter was involved in the south. The Choḷa king Kulottuṅga (1070-1118 A.D.) invaded the Gaṅga dominions, and during the closing years of the eleventh, and possibly also in the early years of the twelfth century, the Choḷas penetrated to the northernmost parts of Kaliṅga.[2] Whether Rāmapāla had actually formed an alliance with the Choḷa

57). According to the inscriptions of Anantavarman Choḍagaṅga, Narasiṁha II and Narasiṁha IV. Anantavarman's empire extended to the Godāvarī in the south, the city of Midhunapura or Midnapur in the north, the Bay of Bengal in the east and the Eastern Ghats in the west (*JAHRS.* VI. 215). The Kendupatna Plates refer to the destruction of the king of Mandāra's capital by Choḍagaṅga and his struggle on the banks of the Ganges (*JASB.* LXV. 229 ff).

[1] III. 45. Mr. N. G. Majumdar inferred also from *RC.* III. 42 that Rāmapāla advanced up to the sea-coast of Orissa (*IB.* 29). But this view is wrong (cf. the commentary and English translation of the verse in *RC.*[2]).

[2] The account of the Kaliṅga war of Kulottuṅga is given in details in the Tamil work *Kaliṅgattupparaṇi* (*IA.* XIX. 329 ff.) and this is corroborated by the Drākshārāma Ins. (*EI.* XXII. 138 ff). According to this record, the general of Kulottuṅga "reduced to ashes the whole of Kaliṅga country, defeated the Gaṅga king, destroyed in battle Devendravarman and others, and planted a pillar of victory on the borders of the Oḍra country." As the editor points out, "the earliest notice of the conquest of Kaliṅga in the records of Kulottuṅga occurs in a stone inscription dated in the 26th year (=1096 A.D.), and as this is repeated in

king we do not know. The Tamil poem *Kaliṅgattupparaṇi,* which describes the Choḷa conquests of North Kaliṅga, also gives a long list of peoples who paid tributes to Kulottuṅga. It includes Vaṅgas, Vaṅgālas, and Magadhas. Kulottuṅga also assumed the title "Lord of the earth lying between the river Ganges and the river Kāverī."[1] Such general statements are, however, liable to suspicion, and cannot be accepted as historical, though it is not impossible that Rāmapāla might have thought it politic to maintain friendly relations with the Choḷa king by nominally acknowledging his suzerainty over the disputed border land. For about this time the Choḷa king was carrying on hostilities against both the Eastern Gaṅgas and the Later Chālukyas. As Rāmapāla's territory was also invaded by both these powers, he might have sought to make alliance with the Choḷas for securing support against the common enemies.

In a significant passage in *Rāmacharita* (III. 24), the expression '*adharita-Karṇāṭekshaṇa-līlā*' is used to describe the condition of Varendrī. The only reasonable interpretation seems to be that Varendrī was successfully guarded against the longing eyes of the Karṇāṭas In other words, the Karṇāṭas made attempts to conquer Bengal, but were prevented by Rāmapāla from doing so.

The Karṇāṭa country was at this time ruled by the Chālukya king Vikramāditya VI. Reference has already been made above to the invasions of Bengal by him and his predecessors.[2] A feudatory chief of the Chālukya king named Ācha also claims to have carried on raids against Bengal towards the close of the eleventh or the beginning of the twelfth century.[3] But even far more important than these raids was the establishment of two Karṇāṭa ruling families within the boundaries of the Pāla kingdom. These were the Senas in West Bengal, and Nānyadeva in Mithilā or North Bihar. The Senas were kept in check by Rāmapāla, though they ultimately drove the Pālas from Bengal, and their history has been dealt with in a separate chapter.[4] But, for the time being, Nānyadeva proved a far more dangerous foe. Up to the end of Mahīpāla I's reign, at any rate, Mithilā was included in the Pāla dominions. How long

the inscriptions of the 30th year and after, one is strongly inclined to believe that this should have taken place in or a little before A.D. 1096."

There might have been an invasion of Kaliṅga by Kulottuṅga in person later than 1096 A.D. For some of the inscriptions of the king dated in the 42nd and 45th years of his reign refer to an invasion of Kaliṅga in which the king himself is said to have set fire to Kaliṅga, destroyed in battle a number of chiefs, and took possession of the seven Kaliṅgas (*EI.* XXII. 141). Cf. also *Coḷas,* II. 33-37.

[1] Drākshārāma Ins., dated 1116 A.D. (*SII.* IV. No. 1029).

[2] See *supra* p. 147. [3] See *infra* p. 208. [4] See ch. VIII. *infra.*

the Pālas continued to rule in that region, it is now difficult to say. Nānya,[1] a feudatory chief of Karnatic origin, ascended the throne of Mithilā in 1097 A.D., and his dynasty ruled over that province for a long time. He claims to have broken the powers of Vaṅga and Gauḍa. The ruler of Vaṅga, with whom Nānyadeva fought, was probably Vijayasena who also claims in his record to have defeated Nānya. The lord of Gauḍa was probably Rāmapāla; for, on general grounds, it appears hardly likely that Nānya could have conquered Mithilā in 1097 A.D. without coming into conflict with Rāmapāla. In any case, it seems certain that Mithilā definitely passed out of the hands of the Pālas during the reign of Rāmapāla.

Another power with which Rāmapāla had come into conflict was the Gāhaḍavālas. The founder of this dynasty, Chandradeva, flourished during the last quarter of the eleventh century A.D. The dynasty ruled over nearly the whole of modern U.P., and their chief seat of authority was probably Benares. Although the imperial city of Kanauj was included in their dominions, and the kings styled themselves as lords of Kanyakubja, they were not infrequently referred to as kings of Benares or Kāśi.[2]

As the boundary of the Gāhaḍavāla kingdom probably touched that of the Pālas, hostility between the two was natural, and almost inevitable. The first reference to the conflict occurs in the Rāhan Grant,[3] dated 1109 A.D., which describes Govindachandra, son of the reigning Gāhaḍavāla king Madanapāla, as "terrific in cleaving the frontal globes of arrays of irresistible mighty large elephants from Gauḍa." The king of Gauḍa with whom Govindachandra fought was undoubtedly Rāmapāla. The expression used in the Gāhaḍavāla grant does not imply any decisive victory, far less territorial conquest, on the part of the Gāhaḍavāla prince, but certainly pays a high tribute to the forces of the Pālas. We do not know whether the clash was due to the aggressive action on the part of the Pālas or of the Gāhaḍavālas, but the latter view is more probable.

The result of the conflict during Rāmapāla's reign is perhaps indicated by the expression *dhṛita-madhyadeśa-tanimā* used to describe the political condition of Varendrī (*RC.* III. 24). It means that Rāmapāla kept in check the growing power of Madhyadeśa, which undoubtedly refers to the Gāhaḍavāla kingdom. This may perhaps be partly attributed to a diplomatic marriage. For we know that Govindachandra married Kumāradevī, the princess of Pīṭhī, whose mother was the daughter of Mahaṇa, the famous Rāshṭrakūṭa chief of Aṅga and the maternal uncle of Rāmapāla.

[1] For the account of Nānyadeva that follows cf. *IHQ.* VII. 679 ff.
[2] *DHNI.* I. 507-8.
[3] Line 9. (*IA.* XVIII. 16, 18).

This marriage alliance was probably engineered by Mahaṇa as a means to cement the alliance between the Pālas and the Gāhaḍavālas. But such political marriages can seldom check political ambitions for long, and in the present case, at any rate, the alliance did not long survive the death of Mahaṇa and Rāmapāla.

A review of the main incidents of Rāmapāla's career, such as may be gleaned from contemporary records, reflects the highest credit upon his character and abilities. Beginning his life as an exile from his native land Varendrī, and maintaining a precarious existence in a corner of his kingdom, Rāmapāla succeeded not only in re-establishing his sovereignty over the whole of Bengal, but also in extending his supremacy over Assam and Orissa. He crushed the power of a valiant and popular chief like Bhīma and successfully guarded his dominions against such formidable foes as the Gaṅgas, the Chālukyas, and the Gāhaḍavālas. The author of *Rāmacharita* says with legitimate pride that under Rāmapāla Varendrī enjoyed peace for a long period, and no wicked person dared disturb her tranquility. This was probably true in regard to the whole of his kingdom towards the close of his reign.

Rāmapāla must have lived up to a considerably old age. According to the Manahali copper-plate,[1] he gave evidence of his valour in the battle-field even during the life-time of his father. He could not, therefore, have been very young when he ascended the throne after his two brothers. The Chandimau Image inscription (No. 42) shows that he must have ruled at least for forty-two years.[2] It may be safely presumed, therefore, that he lived up to the age of nearly seventy years. He was overwhelmed by the news of the death of his maternal uncle Mahaṇa, who, with his sons and nephew, had proved the staunchest supporter in his great hour of trial. Unable to bear the sorrow, Rāmapāla put an end to his own life by drowning himself in the Ganges at Monghyr according to the time-honoured custom in India.[3] Thus ended a great career, a worthy hero of the modern *Rāmāyaṇa* composed by Sandhyākara Nandī.

VII. THE END OF THE PĀLA RULE

The reign of Rāmapāla might well have been regarded by his contemporaries as marking the revival of the greatness of the Pālas, and inaugurating a new era of peace and prosperity. But events

[1] Ins. No. 46, v. 15.
[2] According to Tāranātha, Rāmapāla ruled for sixty-four years.
[3] *RC.* IV. 8-10.

soon proved it to be but the last flickering of a lamp before its final extinction.

Rāmapāla had at least four sons. Of these, Vittapāla and Rājyapāla played important rôles during the life-time of their father,[1] though none of them ever ascended the throne. The two others, Kumārapāla and Madanapāla, who both ruled over the Pāla kingdom, are not referred to in *Rāmacharita* as having taken any part in the eventful reign of their father. The seniority among these four brothers according to age, and the reason why Kumārapāla superseded the other brothers, and his son was succeeded by Madanapāla, are all unknown to us. A mystery hangs over this period of history, and it is deepened by the concluding portion of *RC*. As the title of the book shows, the main purpose of the author was to describe the exploits of Rāmapāla (and of Rāma) and this is clearly stated in several verses at the end of the poem.[2] Yet the story is carried beyond the death of Rāmapāla for three more reigns. This may be explained by supposing that the author desired to bring the historical narrative down to his own time. But what is surprising is that while the poet dismisses in a single verse each of the reigns of Kumārapāla and his son Gopāla III, he devotes no less than thirty-six verses to the reign of Madanapāla. Whether this is purely out of devotion to the reigning king, or there were other motives also for so unceremoniously passing over the reigns of his two predecessors, it is difficult to say. That he deliberately ignored the importance of the two reigns may not unreasonably be concluded from his statement (IV. 15) that Madanapāla's accession removed the dart of grief resulting from the death of Rāmapāla. On the whole, it appears not unlikely that there were internal troubles during the period immediately following the death of Rāmapāla, and they were not over even when Kumārapāla ascended the throne. Kumārapāla was succeeded by his son Gopāla III. The single verse in *RC*. referring to him (IV. 12), and a verse in the Manahali CP.[3] have led scholars to conclude that Gopāla III met with an unnatural death even while he was an infant.[4] Mr. R. D. Banerji has even

[1] *RC*. II. 36; IV. 6.   [2] *Kavi-praśasti*, vv. 8, 9, 11.

[3] Ins. No. 46, v. 17.

[4] Ins. No. 44 would seem to belie the view, if it really belongs to the reign of Gopāla III, and is dated in year 14; for it would then appear that Gopāla III must have reigned for at least 14 years. Mr. N. G. Majumdar refers it to the reign of Gopāla III on palaeographic grounds (*ASI*. 1936-37, pp. 130). But the alphabets show great resemblance with those of the Dinajpur Pillar Ins., which has been referred to the tenth century A.D., and although one or two letters show an advanced form, others like *j* and medial *e* show distinctly early forms. On the whole, it is difficult to say very definitely that the inscription belongs to the reign of Gopāla III and not Gopāla II. Besides, the figure read by Mr. Majumdar as 4

suggested that he was murdered by Madanapāla.[1] But though dark hints to some such foul crime may be detected in *RC.*, there is no positive evidence in support of any of these contentions. All that we definitely know is that Madanapāla succeeded his nephew Gopāla III, and ruled for more than 14 years (Ins. No. 47).

The period covered by the three reigns of Kumārapāla, Gopāla III, and Madanapāla (*c.* 1120-1155 A.D.) saw the final collapse of the Pāla kingdom. The circumstances leading to this catastrophe are not yet fully known to us, but some of the causes operating to the same end, namely the disruption within and invasions from outside, may be described in some detail.

Troubles began early in the reign of Kumārapāla. The Kamauli Plate (No. 50) tells us that Vaidyadeva, the great and favourite minister of Kumārapāla, obtained victory in a naval fight in South Bengal, and, being ordered by his master, put down the rebellion of Tiṁgyadeva in the east. Tiṁgyadeva was presumably the feudal ruler of Kāmarūpa which was conquered by Rāmapāla. For Vaidyadeva, who put down the rebellion, became ruler of the country which included Prāgjyotisha-*bhukti* and Kāmarūpa-*maṇḍala*. The victory of Vaidyadeva, however, did not restore Kāmarūpa to the Pālas, for within a short time, possibly after the death of Kumārapāla, Vaidyadeva practically assumed independence.[2]

About the same time Eastern Bengal also must have passed out of the hands of the Pālas, for we find an independent Varman dynasty ruling in Vikramapura. According to *RC.*, a Varman ruler acknowledged the suzerainty of Rāmapāla, and sought his protection, but the Belāva copper-plate leaves no doubt that Bhojavarman was ruling as an independent chieftain.[3] Vaidyadeva's military campaign in South Bengal perhaps indicates renewed conflict either with Anantavarman Choḍagaṅga, or the Later Chālukyas, leading to the rise of the Senas. As already noted above,[4] the Eastern Gaṅga king is said to have carried his victorious arms right up to the bank of the Ganges, as far as Midnapur, some time before 1135 A.D. He also defeated the king of Mandāra on the Ganges, and destroyed his fortified town Āramya, probably Arambagh in Hooghly district.[5] On the other hand, the Pāla records claim

is very doubtful (cf. *JRASBL.* VII. 216). Dr. N. K. Bhattasali's reconstruction of the history of Gopāla III (*IHQ.* XVII. 214-216) is too imaginary to be seriously considered.

[1] *BI.* 311.

[2] Ins. No. 50, vv. 11, 13-14, and ll. 47 ff.

[3] This has been fully discussed in ch. VII. *infra.*

[4] Cf. *supra* p. 162, f.n. 6.

[5] For Mandāra, cf. *supra* p. 21; also p. 157, f.n. 2 above. For the conquests of Anantavarman in Bengal, cf. the Kendupatna Grant, vv. 22, 30, *JASB.* LXV. 239, 241.

victory in the campaigns in South Bengal during the reign of Kumārapāla, and a somewhat obscure verse in *RC.* (IV. 47) seems to imply that Madanapāla had some success in Kaliṅga, or at least had power to defeat the king of Kaliṅga if the latter dared attack him. But shortly a power arose in the borderland between the kingdoms of the Pālas and Anantavarman, which checkmated both and carried its victorious arms in the heart of their dominions. These were the Senas who undoubtedly took advantage of the conflict between the Pālas and the Eastern Gaṅgas to establish their position in South Bengal. Their task was also facilitated by the invasions of the Later Chālukyas to which detailed reference will be made in a later chapter. It is not also altogether unlikely that the naval campaigns in South Bengal during the reign of Kumārapāla were directed against the Senas.

Like the Eastern Gaṅgas and the Chālukyas in the south, the third hostile power, kept in check by Rāmapāla, *viz.*, the Gāhaḍavālas in the west, also took advantage of his death and the consequent weakness of the Pālas to push forward their conquests. The Māner Plates[1] show that by 1124 A.D. they had advanced up to the district of Patna. It is also evident from the Lar Plates[2] that the Gāhaḍavāla king Govindachandra was in occupation of Monghyr in A.D. 1146. Madanapāla must have achieved some success in his fight with the Gāhaḍavālas towards the end of his reign. For the Jaynagar inscription (No. 47) shows that some time before his 14th regnal year, *i.e.*, about 1154 A.D., he had recovered Monghyr. In his war with the Gāhaḍavālas, he received valuable assistance from his kinsman Chandradeva, the lord of Aṅga, who was the son of Suvarṇadeva and grandson of Mahaṇa.[3] The *RC.* frequently refers to the alliance between the two, and is full of praises for Chandradeva.[4] It is not unlikely that Chandradeva, like his grandfather Mahaṇa, brought about an alliance between the Pāla and the Gāhaḍavāla king both of whom were his near relatives. For *RC.* says (IV. 23) that in a moment of peril, when his kingdom was in disorder, Madanapāla made alliance with a king of godly character. But, for the present, this is a pure conjecture.

[1] *JASB.* XVIII. 81. The conflict between the Pālas and the Gāhaḍavālas seems to be also referred to in *Prākrita Paiṅgalam* (*IHQ.* XI. 565-66).

[2] *EI.* VII. 98.

[3] *IHQ.* V. 35 ff. The view, originally propounded by M.M. H. P. Śāstrī (*RC.*[1] 16) and followed by Mr. R. D. Banerji (*BI.* 312-13), that this Chandra was the Gāhaḍavāla king Chandradeva is untenable. This point has been discussed in App. II in connection with the date of Rāmapāla.

[4] IV. 16-21.

Even apart from the above express reference, there are other indications in *RC.* about great troubles within the kingdom of Madanapāla. Madanapāla is said to have destroyed or dethroned a king named Govardhana (IV. 47). A king of this name is referred to in Belāva copper-plate[1] as having been defeated by Jātavarman, the king of East Bengal. But as Jātavarman was a contemporary of Divya and Vigrahapāla III, it is difficult to identify the two Govardhanas, though this cannot be regarded as altogether impossible. In any case, he may be regarded as a local ruler in Bengal.

But more significant is the reference to a battle on the river Kālindī, which is probably to be identified with the modern river of that name in Malda district which once flowed past or near the capital of Madanapāla. We are told (IV. 27) that Madanapāla had driven back to the Kālindī the vanguard of the forces that had destroyed a large number of soldiers on his side. This probably refers to the conquest of Vijayasena who had already made himself master of Southern and Eastern Bengal. In his Deopārā inscription, he claims to have driven away the lord of Gauḍa, who was almost certainly Madanapāla. The victory was not perhaps a decisive one, but the authority of Madanapāla in North Bengal was considerably weakened, if not finally destroyed, by this invasion.

It is also not unlikely that the disorder in the kingdom, or the battle on the Kālindī, refers to an invasion of Gauḍa by the Karṇāṭa ruler of Mithilā. We have seen above that Nānyadeva claimed to have broken the powers of Gauḍa and Vaṅga. A king, described as *Gauḍadhvaja* Gāṅgeyadeva and mentioned in a colophon as reigning in Tirhut in *Saṁvat* 1076, probably refers to his son Gaṅgadeva ruling in 1154 A.D.[2] The title *Gauḍadhvaja* seems to indicate that he claimed some political authority in Gauḍa. The son of Nānyadeva was almost certainly a contemporary of Madanapāla, and probably attacked his kingdom with some success.

The internal disruption and foreign invasions, described above, led to the collapse of the Pāla kingdom. The Manahali copper-plate (No. 46) shows that at least up to the eighth year of Madanapāla, a considerable portion of North Bengal, if not the whole of it, was included within his kingdom. The nature and extent of his authority over North Bengal after that date cannot be determined with any degree of certainty. The Jaynagar Image inscription (No. 47) shows that in the 14th year of his reign he

[1] *IB.* 14; also *infra* p. 198. [2] *IHQ.* VII. 681.

ruled over the Monghyr district. In view of what we know of the Senas, the Gāhaḍavālas, and the Karṇāṭa rulers of Mithilā, we may safely conclude that when Madanapāla died, the Pālas had ceased to exercise any sovereignty in Western, Southern, and Eastern Bengal, and in Western and Northern Bihar. In other words, the Pāla kingdom was confined to Central and Eastern Bihar, and probably included a portion of Northern Bengal. Within ten years of the death of Madanapāla, the descendants of Dharmapāla and Devapāla, if any, were driven away even from this last refuge by the Senas, and the Pālas passed out of history.

Madanapāla is the last king who is definitely known to have belonged to the great Pāla dynasty. Names of some kings ending in *-pāla* are known from records found in Bihar, but their relationship, if any, with the Pāla dynasty of Bengal has not yet been established. One of these is named Govindapāla, who ruled in the Gayā district. The colophons of a few manuscripts and a stone inscription are dated in years which seem to be counted from the destruction of his kingdom in 1162 A.D.[1] If this view be correct, Govindapāla must have ascended the throne shortly, if not imme-

[1] Govindapāla is known from two stone inscriptions, one of which was found in Gayā, and colophons of seven manuscripts (*PB.* 108-112). One of these alone is dated in the ordinary way—'*Parameśvara-Paramabhaṭṭāraka-Paramasaugata-Mahārājādhirāja-śrīmad-Govindapālasya vijaya-rājya-saṁvatsare 4.*' Three others, including the stone inscription, use, however, peculiar expressions such as "*Śrī-Govindapāla-deva-gatarājye chaturddaśa-samvatsare,*" "*Śrīmad-Govindapāla-devasyātīta-samvatsa 18,*" and "*Śrīmad-Govindapāla-devānāṁ vinashṭarājye ashṭa-triṁśat-samvatsare.*" The dates in three other colophons are given simply as "*Śrī-Govindapālīya saṁvat 24,*" '*Govindapāla-devānāṁ saṁ 37*' and '*Śrīmad-Govindapāla-devānāṁ saṁ 39.*' The remaining colophon, dated in *saṁ* 38, gives the title *Gauḍeśvara* to Govindapāla. The second stone inscription of unknown origin has never been published, and all that we are told is that it was dated in 1178 A.D. (*ASC.* XV. 155). The correct interpretation of the above expressions denoting dates has given rise to difficulties (for a full discussion and references, cf. *JASB.* N.S. XVII. 8 ff). Mr. R. D. Banerji held the view that the king ruled for 39 years, though he ceased to exercise any sovereignty in those places where the expression '*gata-rājye,*' '*vinashṭa-rājye,*' '*atīta-samvatsa*' etc., are used. A far more reasonable view seems to be to interpret them, like similar expressions used in connection with Lakshmaṇasena, as the years counted from the cessation of the reign of Govindapāla. Now the Gayā Stone inscription is dated in 1232 *Vikāri i.e.*, V.S., and '*gata-rājye chaturdaśa-samvatsare.*' According to Mr. Banerji's interpretation, this would place the accession of Govindapāla in 1219 V.S. or 1162 A.D., whereas according to the other view, that year would coincide with the end of his reign. In the former case, Govindapāla must have been on the throne till at least 1200 A.D. (39th year). But this is incompatible with the scheme of chronology of the Sena kings, which, though rejected by Mr. Banerji, is now almost universally adopted. This point has been further discussed in Chap. VIII. App. I. in connection with the chronology of the Sena kings.

diately, after Madanapāla. No connection between the two has yet been established, but the name-ending *-pāla*, the assumption of full imperial titles including 'Lord of Gauḍa,' and the reckoning of date from the end of his reign raise a strong presumption that he was the last member of the Imperial Pāla dynasty. Whether his kingdom extended much further beyond the district of Gayā, where his stone inscription has been found, cannot be determined with any degree of certainty. The assumption of imperial titles and the epithet 'Lord of Gauḍa' may be a vain boast, though the possibility is not altogether excluded that he might have temporarily occupied Gauḍa. For, as we shall see later, the Sena kings had probably to send more than one expedition before they finally seized the Gauḍa kingdom.

Some scholars have assumed the existence of another Pāla king named Palapāla. But the assumption is based upon very doubtful reading of an inscription, and Palapāla cannot find any place in sober history until further evidence is forthcoming.[1] The same may be said of Indradyumnapāla who is only known from tradition.[2]

[1] Mr. R. D. Banerji introduced this Pāla king on the strength of an inscription found at Jaynagar (*JBORS.* XIV. 496). The reading *Gauḍeśvara Palapāla* is, however, impossible, even according to his own *facsimile*, unless we imagine that one letter (*ra*) was dropped by the engraver through mistake, and another letter (*la*) was written in line 1 in two different ways, although separated by only one letter (*JBORS.* XV. 649; *IHQ.* VI. 164). Thus the existence of Palapāla may be seriously doubted.

[2] *IA.* XXXVIII. 248.

APPENDIX I

LIST OF PĀLA INSCRIPTIONS

DHARMAPĀLA

1. Year 26—Bodh-Gayā Ins. *JASB*. N.S. IV. 101 ; *GL*. 29.
2. Year 32—Khalimpur CP. *EI*. IV. 243 ; *GL*. 9.
3. .. —Nālandā CP. *EI*. XXIII. 290.

DEVAPĀLA

4. Year 9—Kurkihār Image Ins. *JBORS*. XXVI. 251.
5. Year 25—Hilsā Image Ins. *JBORS*. X. 33 ; *IA*. 1928, p. 153 ; *JRASBL*. IV. 390.
6. Year 33—Monghyr CP. *EI*. XVIII. 304 ; *GL*. 33.
7. Year 39 or 35—Nālandā CP. *EI*. XVII. 318 ; Monograph No. 1 of V.R.S. ; *JRASBL*. VII. 215.
8. .. —Gheshrāwā Stone Ins. *IA*. XVII. 307 ; *GL*. 45.
9. Year 3—Metal Image Ins. *ASI*. 1927-28, p. 139.

VIGRAHAPĀLA I OR ŚŪRAPĀLA I

10. Year 3—Two identical Bihar Buddha Image Ins. *JASB*. N.S. IV. 108 ; *PB*. 57. For correction of date cf., *JRASBL*. IV. 390.
11. Sārnāth inscription mentioning Jayapāla, who is perhaps the father of Vigrahapāla I. *ASI*. 1907-8, p. 75.

NĀRĀYAṆAPĀLA

12. Year 7—Gayā Temple Ins. *PB*. 60.
13. Year 9—Indian Museum Stone Ins. *PB*. 61-62.
14. Year 17—Bhāgalpur CP. *IA*. XV. 304 ; *GL*. 55.
15. Year 54—Bihar Image Ins. *IA*. XLVII. 110 ; *SPP*. 1328 (B.S.). p. 169.
16. Bādāl Pillar Ins. *EI*. II. 160 ; *GL*. 70.

RĀJYAPĀLA

17. Year 24—Nālandā Pillar Ins. *IA*. XLVII. 111.
18. Year 28—Kurkihār Image Ins. *JBORS*. XXVI. 246.
19. Year 31—Kurkihār Image Ins. *Ibid*. p. 250.
20. Year 32 (31?)—Kurkihār Image Ins. *Ibid*. p. 247.
21. Year 32—Kurkihār Image Ins. *Ibid*. p. 248.

GOPĀLA II

22. Year 1—Nālandā Image Ins. *JASB*. N S. IV. 105 ; *GL*. 86.

23. Year 6—Jājilpārā CP. *Bhāratavarsha* 1344 (B.S.), Part I, p. 264.
24. .. —Bodh-Gayā Buddha Image Ins. *JASB*. N.S. IV. 105 ; *GL*. 88.

VIGRAHAPĀLA II (OR III)

25. Year 3(2?)—Kurkihār Image Ins. *JBORS*. XXVI. 37, 240.
26. Year 8—Terracotta Ins. *Ibid*. 37.
27. Year 19—Kurkihār Image Ins. *Ibid*. 36, 239.
28. Year 19—Kurkihār Image Ins. *Ibid*. 37, 240.

MAHĪPĀLA I

29. (V.S.) 1083—Sārnāth Ins. *IA*. XIV. 139 ; *ASI*. 1903-4, p. 222 ; *JASB*. 1906, p. 445 ; *GL*. 104.
30. Year 3—Bāghāura Image Ins. *EI*. XVII. 355.
31. Year 9—Bāngarh CP. *JASB*. LXI. 77 ; *EI*. XIV. 324 ; *GL*. 91.
32. Year 11—Nālandā Stone Ins. *JASB*. N.S. IV. 106 ; *GL*. 101.
33. Year 11—Bodh-Gayā Image Ins. *PB*. 75.
34. Year 31 (probably 21)—Kurkihār Image Ins. *JBORS*. XXVI. 245.
35. Year 48—Two identical Imādpur Image Ins. *IA*. XIV. 165 (f.n. 17) ; *JRASBL*. VII. 218.
35A. On a colossal statue of the ascetic Buddha at Titarawa or Tetrawan is an Ins. of three lines. Only the name Mahīpāla has been read. *ASC*. I. 39 ; III. 123, No. 11.

NAYAPĀLA

36. Year 15—Gayā Narasiṁha Temple Ins. *PB*. 78.
37. Year 15—Gayā Kṛishṇadvārikā Temple Ins. *JASB*. LXIX. 190 ; *GL*. 110.

VIGRAHAPĀLA III

38. Year 5—Gayā Akshayavaṭa Temple Ins. *PB*. 81.
39. Year 12—Āmgāchhi CP. *EI*. XV. 293 ; *GL*. 121. The date was formerly read as 13. Cf. *PB*. 80.
40. Year 13—Bihar Buddha Image Ins. *PB*. 112.

RĀMAPĀLA.

41. Year 3—Tetrawan Image Ins. *JASB*. N.S. IV. 109 ; *PB* 93 ; for correction of date cf. *JRASBL*. IV. 390.
42. Year 42—Chandimau Image Ins. *PB*. 93-94.

GOPĀLA III

43. Nimdighi (Manda) Ins. *SPP*. XIX. 155; *PB*. 102; *IHQ* XVII. 207.
44. Year 14(?)—Rājibpur Image Ins. *IHQ*. XVII. 217; *ASI*. 1936-37, pp. 130-33. For the date of this Ins. cf. *supra* p. 167, f.n. 4 and *JRASBL*. VII. 216.

MADANAPĀLA

45. Year 3—Bihar Hill Image Ins. *ASC*. III. 124. No. 16.
46. Year 8—Manahali CP. *JASB*. LXIX. Pt. I, p. 68; *GL*. 147.
47. Year 14—Jaynagar Image Ins. *ASC*. III. 125. The date is usually read as 19, but cf. *JRASBL*. VII. 216.

MISCELLANEOUS INSCRIPTIONS

48. Dinajpur (Bāngarh) Pillar Ins. of Kuñjaraghaṭāvarsha. *JASB*. N.S. VII. 619; *PB*. 68; *Vaṅgavāṇī* (Bengali), 1330 (B.S.), p. 249.
49. Irdā CP. of Kāmboja king Nayapāla, Year 13. *EI*. XXII. 150; XXIV. 43.
50. Kamauli CP of Vaidyadeva (mentions Kumārapāla), Year 4. *EI*. II. 350; *GL*. 127.
51. Gayā Gadādhar Image Ins. of Paritosha. *PB*. 82-83.
52. Gayā Śītalā Temple Ins. of Yakshapāla. *IA*. XVI. 64ff; *PB*. 96.

INSCRIPTIONS OF THE PRATĪHĀRA KING MAHENDRAPĀLA (ALSO WRITTEN AS MAHĪNDRAPĀLA) FOUND IN BENGAL AND BIHAR

53. Year 2—British Museum Ins. *PB*. 64.
54. Year 4—Bihar Buddha Image Ins. *ASI*. 1923-24. p. 102.
55. Year 5—Pāhārpur Pillar Ins. Dikshit, *Excavations at Paharpur* (*Memoir ASI*. No 55). p. 75.
56. Year 8—Rāmgayā Daśāvatāra Ins. *PB*. 64.
57. Year 9—British Meseum Ins. *PB*. 64. Pl. XXXI. [The date is read as 9 by R. D. Banerji, and 6 by Kielhorn (*Nach. Gotting*. 1904. pp. 210-11) and Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar (*List*, No. 1644) The reading '9' seems to be right.]
58. Year 9—Gunariya Ins. *PB*. 64; *JASB*. XVI. 278. Pl. V.
59. Year 19(?)—Bihar Ins. (now missing). *PB*. 64. (This may be the same as No. 57).

APPENDIX II

THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE PĀLA KINGS

Nearly twenty years ago,[1] the writer of this chapter laid down a definite scheme of chronology of the Pāla and the Sena kings. His conclusions, though opposed to the prevailing view championed by Mr. R. D. Banerji, have now been generally accepted,[2] with slight modifications, due to new discoveries. It is not necessary, therefore, to discuss the different views once held on the subject, and it will suffice to re-state the fundamental principles on which that scheme was based, and the chronology resulting therefrom.

Proceeding from the one fixed point in the chronology of the Pālas, *viz.*, the date A.D. 1026 for Mahīpāla I supplied by the Sārnāth inscription (No. 29), it is possible to fix the approximate dates of his predecessors and successors by counting backwards and forwards from this fixed date, on the basis of the known reign-periods of those kings[3] and a few well-established data, *viz.*, the synchronism between Dharmapāla and Govinda III, Mahīpāla and Rājendra Choḷa, and Nayapāla and Kalachuri Karṇa; the conquest of Varendra by Vijayasena after the eighth regnal year of Madanapāla; and the end of Madanapāla's reign before the known date of Govindapāla.

The following table is drawn up on this basis, showing the known reign-periods of kings and making allowance (*a*) for the excess of their actual reign-periods over those known at present, and (*b*) the reign-periods of those kings about the duration of whose reign nothing is known so far.

NAME OF KING.	KNOWN REIGN-PERIOD.	APPROXIMATE YEAR OF ACCESSION.
1. Gopāla I	..	750 A.D.
2. Dharmapāla	32	770 „
3. Devapāla	39 (or 35)	810 „
4. Vigrahapāla I or Śūrapāla I	3	850 „
5. Nārāyaṇapāla	54	854 „
6 Rājyapāla	32	908 „

[1] *JASB*. N.S. XVII. 1 ff.

[2] The latest exposition of Mr. Banerji's views is in *JBORS*. XIV. 489-533. For criticism of these views and general discussion on Pāla chronology, cf. *JBORS*. XV. 643-650; *IHQ*. III. 578-591; VI. 153-168.

[3] For the reign-periods, *cf.* the regnal years of the inscriptions in Appendix I.

NAME OF KING		KNOWN REIGN-PERIOD.	APPROXIMATE YEAR OF ACCESSION.
7. Gopāla II	..	.. 17	940 „
8. Vigrahapāla II	..	.. 26 (?)	960 „
9. Mahīpāla I	..	.. 48	988 „
10. Nayapāla	..	.. 15	1038 „
11. Vigrahapāla III	..	.. ..	1055 „
12. Mahīpāla II	..	.. ..	1070 „
13. Śūrapāla II	..	.. ..	1075 „
14. Rāmapāla	..	.. 42	1077 „
15. Kumārapāla	..	.. ..	1120 „
16. Gopāla III	..	.. 14 (?)	1125 „
17. Madanapāla	..	.. 14	1140 „
18. Govindapāla	..	.. 4	1155 „

Although the general basis of the chronology has been explained above, it is necessary to make a few remarks regarding the dates assigned to some of the kings.

1. *Gopāla* I

Dr. M. Shahidullah placed the date of Gopāla's accession in 715 A.D., chiefly on the strength of Tāranātha's account [1] But his whole chronological scheme is vitiated by the wrong assumption that Govichandra was the last king of the Chandra dynasty. He ignores altogether the reign of Lalitachandra who, according to Tāranātha, succeeded Govichandra and ruled for many years in peace.[2] Dr. Shahidullah puts the end of Govichandra's reign at about 700 A.D. If we add the long reign of Lalitachandra, and the years of anarchy that followed, the commencement of Gopāla's reign may be reasonably fixed at about the middle of the eighth century. The date has been assumed, in round numbers, as about 750 A.D. but this should be regarded as only an approximate one.

Mr. D. C. Bhattacharya[3] places the accession of Gopāla in 700 A.D., mainly on the strength of Tibetan traditions, and accepts Tāranātha's statement that Gopāla ruled for 45 years. Presumably Gopāla was fairly advanced in age when he was called to the throne at a critical time. Hence we should not assign a long reign to him

[1] *IHQ*. VII. 530 ff. [2] See *infra* p. 183.

[3] *IHQ*. III. 571-591; VI. 153-168. In drawing up the chronology of the Pālas, Mr. Bhattacharya has relied mostly on astronomical grounds. His conclusions in respect of the later kings (after Vigrahapāla II) agree generally with those of mine. Regarding the earlier kings, the chief difference lies in the too early dates he assigns to Gopāla and Dharmapāla on the strength of various Tibetan traditions. According to Mr. Bhattacharya, the first three kings of the Pāla dynasty ruled for a period of 140 years. This is so unusual that nothing but the strongest positive evidence would warrant the assumption.

in the absence of any positive evidence. As regards Tibetan traditions, Tāranātha's account agrees with the proposed date.[1] Besides it has already been noted above (*supra* p. 124) that in an almost contemporary Tibetan text, Dharmapāla is mentioned as a contemporary of Mu-tig Btsan-po who ascended the throne in 797 A.D. This certainly supports the chronology adopted above, and does not favour the view that Gopāla was elected king long before 750 A.D.

2. *Dharmapāla*

The contemporaneity of Dharmapāla and Govinda III shows that Dharmapāla must have been on the throne some time during 793-814 A.D., which covers the reign-period of the latter. The statement in the Rāshṭrakūṭa records that Govinda III defeated the Gurjara king Nāgabhaṭa, and that Dharmapāla submitted to the Rāshṭrakūṭa king, perhaps enables us to narrow down the limits of the date. It was formerly supposed that the two events followed one another within a short time, and since the defeat of Nāgabhaṭa is mentioned in the Radhanpur Plates dated 27th July, 808 A.D. (according to Kielhorn, but August 809 A.D. according to Altekar),[2] but omitted in the Wani Grant issued in 807 A.D., they must have taken place sometime between these two dates.[3] But this theory must be given up in view of the fact that the defeat of Nāgabhaṭa is mentioned in the Manne Plates,[4] dated Ś. 724 (=802 A.D.), Nesari Plates dated Ś. 727 (805 A.D.),[5] and Sisavai Grant dated Ś. 729 (807 A.D.).[6] The Manne Plates were formerly regarded as spurious, but the newly discovered Sisavai Grant makes it probable that they were genuine. In any case we must hold that the defeat of Nāgabhaṭa by Govinda III took place certainly before 805 A.D., and probably before 802 A.D.[7] Unless, therefore, we assume that Govinda III's campaign against Dharmapāla took place long after he had defeated Nāgabhaṭa,[8] which is very unlikely, we must presume that Dharmapāla was on the throne at the beginning of the ninth century A.D.; and as he had already extended his power up to Kanauj by that time, his accession must be placed considerably before it.

[1] See *infra* p. 187.
[2] *AR.* 65, f.n. 49.
[3] *GP.* 44.
[4] *Ep. Carn.* IX. 58.
[5] Khare, *Sources of the Medieval History of the Deccan*, Vol. I. p. 18. The actual date is December 805 (*EI.* XXIII. 216, f.n. 6).
[6] *EI.* XXIII. 214-217.
[7] For further discussion cf. *EI.* XXIII. 293-297.
[8] This is the view held by Altekar (*D. R. Bhandarkar Volume*, pp. 158-68; *EI.* XXIII. 293-94), who thinks that Govinda III fought twice with the northern powers. The first occasion was early in his reign when he merely repulsed a

3. *Gopāla* II

On the strength of a passage in the Pāla inscriptions,[1] it was held that Gopāla II reigned for a very long period, at least a longer period than his predecessor. But as the same passage occurs in an inscription dated in the 6th year of Gopāla II,[2] it can only be regarded as conventional.

The date in a palm-leaf MS. of the *Maitreya Vyākaraṇa* was read by MM. H. P. Śāstrī as year 57 of Gopāladeva's reign.[3] But Mr. R. D. Banerji and Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar read the date respectively as 17 and 11.[4] In view of these facts the long reign formerly assigned to Gopāla II can no longer be upheld.

4. *Vigrahapāla* II *and* III

A manuscript of *Pañcharakshā* was copied in the twenty-sixth year of Vigrahapāla,[5] who must be identified either with Vigrahapāla II or Vigrahapāla III; for as these two kings ruled within a

Gurjara invasion, presumably under Nāgabhaṭa. Later, some time after 808 or 809 A.D., he planned a grand offensive expedition in Northern India, presumably against Dharmapāla. The main argument of Altekar is based on the omission of all references to the victory against Dharmapāla in the stereotyped *praśasti* of Govinda III, which mentions the defeat of even a petty mountain chief like Māraśarva. Altekar holds that as Govinda III died soon after, "he had not the necessary leisure to engage the services of a new poet to describe his sensational victories both in the north and the south. It was left for his son Amoghavarsha to rescue from oblivion his father's memorable achievements." It is to be noted, however, that even according to Altekar's chronology, Govinda III survived his victories over Dharmapāla for at least four years, an ample time for composing a new *praśasti*, or rather adding to the old one. Further, the specific reference to the names of king Nāgabhaṭa and Dharmapāla does not occur in the earlier records of Amoghavarsha, though they refer to victories of Govinda III over the Gurjaras and Gauḍa, but we find it for the first time in a record dated 871 A.D., *i.e.*, more than sixty years after the events took place. Professor Mirashi has justly pointed out, that according to the Sanjān Plates, Dharmapāla and Chakrāyudha submitted to Govinda III before the latter's encampment at the capital of Mahārāja Śarva who is identified by all scholars, including Dr. Altekar, with Māraśarva, mentioned in the stereotyped draft. The Dharmapāla incident, therefore, must have taken place when that draft was made (*EI.* XXIII. 297). A consideration of all the facts points to the conclusion that comparatively unimportant success of Govinda III against Dharmapāla was magnified beyond all proportion in later times, and glowing imaginary descriptions were added by later poets.

[1] *chirataram-avaner......bhartā abhūt.* (v. 8. of the Ins. No. 31).

[2] Ins. No. 23.

[3] Sastri-*Cat.* I. 13.

[4] *JBORS.* XIV. 490-91. Mr. D. C. Bhattacharya opposes the views of Mr. Banerji and Dr. Bhandarkar and agrees with MM. Śāstrī that the date is 57 (*IHQ.* VI. 152). Mr. Banerji reproduces a micro-photograph of the portion of the MS. containing the date (*op. cit.*). The first figure seems undoubtedly to be 1, but the second is very doubtful.

[5] *PB.* 67.

century, it would be unsafe to rely on palaeography and assign the MS. definitely to one of them.[1] For the same reason, king Vigrahapāla mentioned in the Kurkihār Image Ins.[2] of year 19 should be taken as either Vigrahapāla II or Vigrahapāla III. One of these kings must have, therefore, reigned for at least 26 years. Following previous writers, I have assumed this king to be Vigrahapāla II.

5. *Mahīpāla* I

The date assigned to Mahīpāla I is based on the assumption that the Sārnāth Ins., dated 1026 A.D., belongs to his reign. This point has been discussed above (*supra* p. 140). The initial year, 988 A.D., satisfies the astronomical data contained in a MS. written in the 6th year of Mahīpāla's reign.[3]

6. *Nayapāla*

The date of Nayapāla is controlled by the fact that he was a contemporary of the Kalachuri king Karṇa who ascended the throne in 1041 A.D.[4] It is difficult to assay the exact value of the Tibetan tradition[5] in fixing the year of Nayapāla's accession, but the date suggested is in full agreement with this.

7. *Rāmapāla*

Mr. D. C. Bhattacharya made an attempt to fix the date of Rāmapāla's death on the strength of a passage in *Seka-śubhodayā*. Apart from the fact that this book cannot claim any historical character, and is merely a collection of fables and legends,[6] the

[1] *JASB*. N.S. XVI. 301 ff. Mr. D. C. Bhattacharya adversely criticised the general principles formulated in this paper (*IHQ*. III. 579), but later himself formulated the same principles (*IHQ*. VI. 155).

[2] Ins. Nos. 27-28.

[3] This statement is based on the calculation of Mr. D. C. Bhattacharya, *IHQ*. III. 584. Mr. J. C. Ghosh, on the other hand, places the accession of Mahīpāla in 981 A.D., and supports it on astronomical grounds (*IC*. I. 291). This only proves how little we may rely on astronomical data in fixing a definite date. Mr. Ghosh's theory is based on some details furnished by Tāranātha which are hardly credible.

[4] This is the general view based on Kielhorn's calculation, but Mr. J. C. Ghosh places the accession of Karṇa in 1039 A.D. (*IC*. I. 289).

[5] Cf. the remarks made above in connection with the history of Nayapāla. According to the Tibetan tradition, Nayapāla's coronation took place shortly before Atīśa left for Tibet (*IHQ*. VI. 159), an event for which various dates have been proposed between 1038 and 1042 A.D. (*v. supra* p. 145). D. C. Bhattacharya has calculated the date of Atīśa's departure as March, 1041 A.D., but this may be doubted. The proposed date of Nayapāla's accession is, therefore, in full agreement with the Tibetan tradition.

[6] The book *Seka-śubhodayā* ('Blessed advent of the Shaikh') is ascribed to Halāyudha Miśra, the famous minister of Lakshmaṇasena, but this is absurd on the

expression recording the date (*Śāke yugma-veṇu-randhra-gate*) does not offer any intelligible meaning. By different emendations of the passage, Mr. Bhattacharya and Dr. N. K. Bhattasali fix the year of Rāmapāla's death as 1042 Śaka (=1120 A.D.).[1] The same date has been suggested for the end of Rāmapāla's reign according to the general scheme of chronology adopted by me, and not on the basis of the above interpretation.

MM. H. P. Śāstrī[2] and Mr. R. D. Banerji[3] identified Chandra, mentioned as a friend of Madanapāla in *Rāmacharita* (IV. 16-21), with king Chandradeva who founded the Gāhaḍavāla dynasty of Kanauj. They therefore held that as this Chandradeva died before 1104 A.D., Madanapāla must have ascended the throne before that. Dr. R. G. Basak has, however, pointed out two very important facts mentioned in *Rāmacharita* about Chandra, *viz.*, (1) that he was a *mahāmāṇḍalika* and the ruler of Aṅga, and (2) that his father was Suvarṇa. As Dr. Basak has suggested, Suvarṇa is almost certainly to be identified with the son, named Suvarṇa, of Mahaṇa, the ruler of Aṅga, and the maternal uncle of Rāmapāla.[4] Thus Chandra was the nephew of Rāmapāla, and cousin of Madanapāla. He probably succeeded his grandfather Mahaṇa as ruler of Aṅga, and we know that Mahaṇa died shortly before Rāmapāla. There is thus no valid reason for the belief that Madanapāla was a contemporary of the Gāhaḍavāla king Chandradeva.

8. *Gopāla* III

The chronology of the successors of Rāmapāla has been based on the assumption that Gopāla III had a reign of 14 years. The difficulty of assuming the Ins. No. 44 to be dated in the year 14 of Gopāla III has been discussed above (*supra* p. 167, f.n. 4), but this view has been provisionally accepted.

face of it. Dr. S. K. Chatterji rightly declares it to be a forgery, but regards it as not later than the 16th century (Foreword to the edition of Mr. Sukumar Sen published in Hrishīkeśa Series. p. v.). Mr. R. D. Banerji points out that as the book mentions a Musalman king named Hasan Śāha, evidently a mistake for Sultān Alāuddin Husain Shāh, the only king of that name who ruled over Bengal, it cannot be earlier than the 16th century (*JBORS*. XIV. 522). The book cannot by any means be regarded as a reliable source of historical information, though it refers to some historical figures and events. Mr. Banerji, however, goes too far when he asserts that the work does not contain a single passage which may be taken to be historically accurate. (*op. cit.* pp. 522-23). The statement, for example, that Rāmapāla drowned himself in the Ganges (pp. 60-61) is corroborated by *Rāmacharita* (IV. 9), and Halāyudha, Dhoyī, Govardhana, and Umāpatidhara are correctly stated to be contemporaries of Lakshmaṇasena.

[1] *IHQ*. III. 583; VI. 160-61; XVII. 222.

[2] *RC.*[1] 16. [3] *PB*. 103. [4] *IHQ*. V. 35-48.

APPENDIX III

LĀMĀ TĀRANĀTHA'S ACCOUNT OF BENGAL[1]

The Tibetan historian Lāmā Tāranātha was born in 1573 A.D., and completed his famous work '*History of Buddhism in India*' in the year 1608 A.D. His main object was to give a detailed account of the Buddhist teachers, doctrines, and institutions in India during the different periods. He has, however, always taken care to add the names of the kings under whose patronage, or during whose regime, they flourished. In this way he has preserved a considerable amount of Buddhist traditions regarding the political history of India. That these traditions cannot be regarded as reliable data for the political history of India admits of no doubt. At the same time there is equally little doubt that they contain a nucleus of historical truths, which neither Indian literature nor Indian tradition has preserved for us. This fact, which will be illustrated in the following pages, makes it desirable to give a short summary of the political history of Bengal which may be gleaned from the pages of Tāranātha.

The only kingdom in the east, of which Tāranātha gives the names of successive generations of kings, is Bhaṅgala, which may be taken to denote, in a general way, Southern and Eastern Bengal.[2]

According to Tāranātha, the Chandra dynasty ruled in Bhaṅgala before the Pālas, and the names of all the kings mentioned by him prior to Gopāla end in *-chandra*.

One of these kings was Vṛikshachandra, whose descendants, king Vigamachandra and his son king Kāmachandra, ruled in the east during the time of Śrī-Harsha (*i.e.* the emperor Harshavardhana)

[1] This Appendix is abridged from an article by the author published in *IHQ*. XVI. 219ff. The account is based on the German translation of Tāranātha's *History of Buddhism* by A. Schiefner (*Tāranātha's Geschichte des Buddhismus in Indien, aus dem Tibetischen ubersetzt* von Anton Schiefner, St. Petersburg, 1869). Figures within brackets refer to the pages of this book. Portions of this book were translated into English in *Indian Antiquary* (IV. 361ff), but the translation is not always accurate as the following pages will show.

[2] Attention may be drawn to the following passages: (1) In Oḍivisa, Bhaṅgala, and Rāḍhā (p. 72); (2) In the land Puṇḍravardhana, lying between Magadha and Bhaṅgala (p. 99); (3) In Bhaṅgala and in Varendra (p. 211); (4) Vimalachandra ruled over the three provinces, Bhaṅgala, Kāmarūpa, and Tirahuti (p. 172).

In one passage Gauḍa is referred to as a part of Bhaṅgala (p. 82), but it is not clear whether it means that Gauḍa was included within the kingdom of Bhaṅgala, or formed geographically a part of it. The former seems to be the intended meaning.

(p. 126). Next we hear of king Siṁhachandra, of the Chandra family (presumably the one founded by Vṛikshachandra), who flourished during the reign of Śila, son of the emperor Śrī-Harsha (p. 146). Bālachandra, son of Siṁhachandra, being driven from Bhaṅgala (presumably by the powerful king Pañchama Siṁha of the Lichchhavi family whose kingdom extended from Tibet to Triliṅga and Benares to the sea) ruled in Tīrahuti (*i.e.* Trihut in North Bihar) (pp. 146, 158). Bālachandra's son Vimalachandra, however, retrieved the fortunes of his family, and ruled over the three kingdoms Bhaṅgala, Kāmarūpa, and Tīrahuti. He married the sister of king Bharthari (Bhartṛihari ?) of the Mālava royal family, and was succeeded by his son Govichandra about the time when Dharmakīrti, the famous Buddhist teacher, died (p. 195). Govichandra was succeeded by Lalitachandra, his relation on the father's side, who ruled for many years in peace (p. 197).[1] After referring to the reigns of Govichandra and his successor Lalitachandra, both of whom attained *Siddhi* (spiritual salvation), Tāranātha remarks :

> "Thus Lalitachandra was the last king of the Chandra family. In the five eastern provinces, Bhaṅgala, Oḍiviśa (Orissa) and the rest, every Kshatriya, Grandee Brāhmaṇa, and merchant was a king in his own house (in the neighbourhood), but there was no king ruling over the country" (p. 197).[2]

Then follows a long account of the Buddhist teachers of the period. Continuing the historical narrative in the next chapter, Tāranātha first tells us how a Tree-god begot a son on a young Kshatriya woman[3] near Puṇḍravardhana ; how this son became a devotee of the goddess Chundā ; how, directed by the goddess in a dream, he went to the Vihāra of Ārya Khasarpana, and, having

Tāranātha's geographical notion is clearly indicated in the following passage :

"Eastern India consists of three parts : Bhaṅgala and Oḍiviśa belong to Aparāntaka and are called its eastern part. The north-eastern provinces Kāmarūpa, Tripura and Hasama are called Girivarta, adorned with mountains. Proceeding towards the east near the Northern Hills are the provinces Nangaṭa Pukham on the sea coast, Balgu etc., Rakhang, Haṁsavatī and the remaining parts of the kingdom of Munjang ; further off are Champā, Kāmboja and the rest. All these are called by the general name Koki" (p. 262).

For further discussion of Tāranātha's account of Bhaṅgala and the light it throws on the location of the original kingdom of the Pālas cf. *IHQ.* XVI. 219ff.

[1] Rai Bahadur S. C. Das gives a different version of this account (*JASB.* 1898, p. 22).

[2] The translation of this passage as given in *IA.* IV. 365-66 *viz.*, 'In Oḍiviśa, in Bengal, and the other five provinces of the east......etc.' is wrong. This has been followed in *Gauḍarājamālā* (p. 21), and *Bāṅgālār Itihāsa* (p. 162) by R. D Banerji. The original German passage is : "In den fünf östlichen Ländergebieten Bhaṅgala, Oḍiviśa und den übrigen...."

[3] "A shepherdess" according to Buston (p. 156).

prayed there for a kingdom, was asked to proceed towards the east (p. 202). Then occurs the following queer story:

"At that time the kingdom of Bhaṅgala had been without a king for many years, and people were suffering great miseries. The leaders gathered and elected a king in order that the kingdom might be lawfully ruled. The elected king was, however, killed that very night by a strong and ugly Nāga woman who assumed the form of a queen of an earlier king (according to some, Govichandra, according to others, Lalitachandra). In this way she killed every elected king. But as the people could not leave the kingdom without a king, they elected one every morning, only to see that he was killed by her during night and his dead body thrown out at day-break. Some years passed in this way, the citizens being elected in turn as king for the day. At this time a devotee of the goddess Chundā came to a house, where the family was overwhelmed with grief. On enquiry he learnt that next day the turn of the elected king fell on a son of that house. He, however, offered to take the place of the son, on receiving some money, and the joy of the family knew no bounds. He obtained the reward and was elected king in the morning. When in midnight the Nāga woman, in the form of a Rākshasī, approached towards him, he struck her with the wooden club (which he always carried), sacred to his tutelary deity, and she died. The people were greatly astonished to see him alive in the morning. He thereupon offered to take the place of others whose turn came next to be elected as kings, and he was elected king seven times in course of seven days. Then, on account of his pre-eminent qualifications, the people elected him as a permanent king and gave him the name Gopāla" (pp. 203-4).

This story is a fine illustration of historical myths. The anarchy and turmoil in Bengal, due to the absence of any central political authority, and the election of Gopāla to the throne by the voice of the people, undoubtedly form the historical background against which the popular nursery-tale of a demoness devouring a king every night has been cleverly set. Such a story cannot be used as historical evidence except where, as in the present case, the kernel of historical fact is proved by independent evidence. By a further analysis of the story it may be possible to glean a few more facts about Gopāla.

According to the story, Gopāla was born near Puṇḍravardhana, *i.e.* in Varendra, although he became king of Bhaṅgala, which undoubtedly stands for Vaṅgāla or Vaṅga. This offers a solution of what might otherwise have been a little riddle. For whereas in the *Rāmacharita*, Varendrī is referred to as *janakabhūḥ* (father-land) of the Pālas, the contemporary inscriptions call them *Vaṅgapati* or rulers of Vaṅga, and refer to Gauḍa and Vaṅga as separate kingdoms. Tāranātha also used the name of Varendra, as distinguished from Bhaṅgala.[1] It may thus be assumed that the birth-place of Gopāla was in Varendra, but the throne which was offered to him was that of Vaṅgāla or Vaṅga.

[1] Cf. *supra* p. 182, f.n. 2, examples (2) and (3).

Tāranātha says that although Gopāla commenced his career as a ruler of Bhaṅgala, he conquered Magadha towards the close of his reign (p. 204). In order to understand this properly, we must consider Tāranātha's account of the gradual growth of the Pāla empire under the successors of Gopāla. According to Tāranātha, Gopāla ruled for 45 years, and was succeeded after his death by Devapāla (p. 208), who conquered Varendra (p. 209). Devapāla died after a reign of 48 years, and was succeeded by his son Rasapāla, who ruled for 12 years (p. 214). The son of the latter was Dharmapāla, who ruled for 64 years and subjugated Kāmarūpa, Tīrahuti, Gauḍa and other countries, so that his empire extended from the sea in the east to Delhi in the west, and from Jālandhara in the north to the Vindhya mountains in the south (pp. 216-17).

Tāranātha's list of successive Pāla kings is obviously wrong, as we know from the copper-plate grants of the Pālas that the true order of succession was Gopāla, his son Dharmapāla, and the latter's son Devapāla. Rasapāla is otherwise unknown, unless we identify him with Rājyapāla who is referred to as the son and heir-apparent of Devapāla in the Monghyr copper-plate grant of the latter. But even then, according to the copper-plate grants, he never succeeded his father as king.

As regards the conquests of these kings it is difficult to understand how Gopāla could conquer Magadha, while Gauḍa and Varendra were yet unsubdued. Again, the Khalimpur copper-plate clearly shows that Dharmapāla ruled over Varendra, and it must have, therefore, been conquered before the time of Devapāla.

In spite, however, of these obvious discrepancies, we must hold that Tāranātha had access to some historical texts, now lost to us, and did not draw purely upon his imagination. For the election of Gopāla, the long reign and extensive conquests of Dharmapāla, and the existence of a ruler named Devapāla with a long reign are known to us today only from the inscriptions of the Pālas, to which Tāranātha had no access. Similarly his account of the Chandra dynasty may have some foundation of truth as will be shown later.[1]

[1] For the account of the Chandra dynasty that ruled in Bengal in the tenth and eleventh centuries A.D., and in Arakan since seventh century A.D., cf. Ch. VII. Confused traditions about the relation between Pāla and Chandra kings are preserved in Bengal folklore. In the famous song of Mānik Chandra, of which a critical account has been given by G. A. Grierson [*JASB.* XLVII (1878), Part I, pp. 135ff], he is represented as brother of Dharmapāla. The following extracts from Grierson's article give the substance of the story:

"In the Dimla *thana*, situated to the north-west of Rangpur and nine or ten miles to the S. E. of the sub-divisional head-quarters of Bāgdokarā, is the city of Dharmapāl (Dharmapur). To the west of this city, at a distance of two miles,

Evidently he gathered his information from certain old texts, and either these were wrong in many details, or he misunderstood them. Any one of these causes, or both, might account for the distorted version of the Pāla history which we meet with in his book. It is, therefore, unsafe to rely upon his statements except where they are corroborated by other evidences, though it would be wiser to have them in view, in so far at least as they are not unintelligible in themselves, nor contradicted by more positive testimony.

Tāranātha gives us some data by which we can approximately determine the dates of events he relates. Thus he says that Govichandra ascended the throne about the time when the great Buddhist teacher Dharmakīrti died. As Dharmakīrti was a disciple of Dharmapāla (p. 176), who was a Professor in Nālandā at the time when the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang visited it, Govichandra's reign may be placed in the last quarter of the seventh century A.D. As his successor Lalitachandra ruled for many years, his death and

was the city of Mānik Chandra, now, however, called after his more famous wife 'Maynā-matir Koṭ.'

"Between Dharmapāl and Mānik Chandra a war arose which ended in the defeat and disappearance of the former, and triumph of the latter.

"After this victory Mānik Chandra took up his residence at Dharmapur, while his wife Maynā remained at her old home 'Maynā-matir Koṭ.'

"After the death of Mānik Chandra, Maynā gave birth to a son Gopīchandra. He married Adunā and Padunā, two daughters of Hariśchandra (Hariśchandra Rājār Pāṭ is shown in village Charchara, 7 or 8 miles south of the ruins of Dharmapur)."

The rest of the story narrates how the king abdicated the throne, took to an ascetic life, and left home as a disciple of a Guru of low caste called Hāḍi Siddhā.

Mr. Bisvesvar Bhattacharya (*JASB.* N.S. VI. 131-34) gives a somewhat different account. He refers to the West Bengal version by Durlabha Mallika according to which Gopīchandra's capital was at Pāṭikānagar, and his grandfather and great-grandfather were named respectively Suvarṇachandra and Dhārichandra. Mr. Bhattacharya identifies Pāṭikānagar with Patkāpārā, which lies close to Maynā-matir Koṭ.

Mr. Bhattacharya says that he could not find any trace of the tradition, among the Jugis, that Dharmapāla and Mānik Chandra were brothers: on the other hand some ballad refers to Mānik Chandra as the grandson of Dharmapāla. The story of the fight between Maynāmatī and Dharmapāla is also unknown to the Jugis.

Many ballads are current in Bengal about Gopīchandra and Maynāmatī. Some of these have been collected by Dr. D. C. Sen in *Gopīchandrer Gāna,* Vols. I. II, (published by the Calcutta University). Reference may also be made to the following: 1. *Mīnachetana,* edited by Dr. N. K. Bhattasali (Dacca Sāhitya Parishat) and 2. *Gopīchānder Sannyāsa,* by Abdul Sukur Muhammad. Gopīchandra is sometimes referred to as a ruler of Mṛikula now called Mehārkula in Tippera district. This agrees with the tradition preserved by Tāranātha.

the end of the Chandra dynasty may be placed about 725 A.D. Then followed the period of anarchy during which 'Bhaṅgala was without a king for good many years' (p. 203). If we assign twenty-five years to this period, the accession of Gopāla may be placed about the middle of the eighth century A.D. This fairly agrees with the chronology of the Pāla kings which has been derived from independent data.

It is unnecessary to dwell any further on the historical account of Tāranātha, as we have sure epigraphic data for the later history of Bengal.

APPENDIX IV

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEVAPĀLA AND VIGRAHAPĀLA.

Devapāla was succeeded on the throne by Vigrahapāla I, also known as Śūrapāla. There is a great deal of controversy regarding the relationship between the two. According to some, Vigrahapāla was the son, and according to others, the nephew, of Devapāla.[1] The confusion is due to the peculiar way in which the genealogy is described in the copper-plates of Nārāyaṇapāla and his successors. The genealogy begins with Gopāla, and, after his son Dharmapāla, reference is made to the latter's younger brother Vākpāla. Then we are told that from him was born Jayapāla, whose victory over the enemies enabled his *pūrvaja* or elder (brother ?) Devapāla to enjoy the blessings of a paramount sovereignty. The next verse in the copper-plate of Nārāyaṇapāla describes the victorious exploits of Jayapāla, but it is omitted in subsequent records. The verse that follows says that "his son was Vigrahapāla."

Now, according to the rules of syntax, a pronoun must refer to the nearest proper name. Accordingly, Jayapāla must be taken as the son of Vākpāla, and Vigrahapāla, as the son of Jayapāla. As Devapāla is referred to as '*pūrvaja*' or elder (brother ?) of Jayapāla, he was also regarded as a son of Vākpāla.

The discovery of the Monghyr copper-plate showed the erroneous nature of the last part of the above conclusions, for Devapāla is therein definitely stated to be the son of Dharmapāla.

Further, it led to a difference of opinion among scholars regarding the genealogy of Jayapāla and Vigrahapāla. Some scholars, discarding the old view, held that as Devapāla is described as the elder (brother) of Jayapāla, the latter must have been a son of Dharmapāla. They also hold that as in all records, subsequent to the time of Nārāyaṇapāla, the verse containing the expression 'his son was Vigrahapāla' follows immediately the one containing reference to Devapāla, Vigrahapāla must be regarded as the son of Devapāla. "In the Bhagalpur grant (of Nārāyaṇapāla)," says Dr. Hoernle, "this reference is obscured through the interpolation of an inter-

[1] The former view is upheld by A. K. Maitreya (*GL.* 67 f.n.) following Hoernle (*Centenary Review, JASB.* App. II. 206). The latter view, originally propounded by Dr. Kielhorn (*EI.* VIII. App. I. 17), is supported by R. D. Banerji (*BI.* 215-219).

mediate verse in praise of Jayapāla, which makes it appear as if Vigrahapāla were a son of Jayapāla."[1]

Now, the word 'interpolation,' used by Dr. Hoernle, is very unfortunate; for Nārāyaṇapāla's Grant offers the earliest version of the genealogical portion which was copied in later documents. The difference between the two must, therefore, be due, not to interpolation in the former, but to abridgment or omission in the latter. As such, our conclusion must be based on the reading of the Bhagalpur copper-plate, and Vigrahapāla should be regarded as the son of Jayapāla. The latter, again, should be taken as the son of Vākpāla, for '*pūrvaja*' means an 'elder,' and may refer to a cousin as well as a brother.

The most important argument in support of this view is, that otherwise it is difficult to account for the mention of Vākpāla and Jayapāla in the records of Nārāyaṇapāla and subsequent kings. There is no reference to them in the records of either Dharmapāla or Devapāla, for whom they are said to have successfully fought. Why are their memories suddenly revived in the time of Nārāyaṇapāla, and they are given credits for military victories during the reigns of Dharmapāla and Devapāla? The most satisfactory answer to this question is that they were the ancestors of the reigning king. Reference to their prowess and heroism was intended not merely to soothe his own vanity, but perhaps also as a diplomatic move, by way of reminding the people, that although he could not claim a direct descent from the renowned emperors Dharmapāla and Devapāla, he could claim a share in their glory through his ancestors.

[1] Hoernle, *op. cit.*

APPENDIX V

KING RĀJYAPĀLA OF THE KĀMBOJA FAMILY

There is a sharp difference of opinion among scholars regarding the identity of king Rājyapāla of the Irdā copper-plate (No. 49) and the well-known Pāla king of that name. Mr. N. G. Majumdar, who edited the Irdā Plate, regarded it as quite unlikely that the two Rājyapālas were identical,[1] but subsequently changed his opinion, and held the identity as almost certain.[2] Mr. J. C. Ghosh upheld the identity and suggested the reading '*Kamboja-Dhaṅgv-atiparaḥ*' for '*Kamboja-vaṅśa-tilakaḥ*,'[3] thus doing away altogether with the Kāmboja origin of the family. But this reading is very doubtful, and has been justly questioned.[4] Dr. D. C. Sircar also upholds the identification.[5]

But although the presumption about the identity is certainly a reasonable one, the evidence in favour of it cannot be regarded as convincing or conclusive.[6] There is a great deal of force in the argument of Dr. H. C. Ray who rejects the identity.[7]

The chief argument against the proposed identity is the Kāmboja lineage of Rājyapāla of the Irdā copper-plate. But, as Dr. D. C. Sircar points out, instances are not wanting where even kings of well-known dynasties are described as belonging to other families, probably on account of their mother's lineage. Thus a Pallava king is described as '*Kaikeya-vaṁś-odbhava*,'[8] and a Choḷa king as '*Kaḍamba-kula-nandana*.'[9] In the latter case, at least, we have reasons to believe that the mother of the Choḷa king belonged to Kaḍamba or Kadamba dynasty.

Besides, we should remember that the Pālas had no uniform tradition about their lineage, and none of their records, up to the time of Rājyapāla, refers in any way to the dynasty to which they belonged. If, therefore, we suppose that Rājyapāla's mother belonged to Kāmboja family, we can easily explain the epithet *Kamboja-kula-tilaka* (the ornament of the Kamboja family) applied to Rājyapāla in the Irdā copper-plate. It would then follow that the Pāla king Gopāla II, who succeeded Rājyapāla on the paternal throne, had a rival in his brother Nārāyaṇapāla II, who carved out an independent

[1] *EI*. XXII. 152. [2] *Modern Review*, September 1937, pp. 323-24.
[3] *EI*. XXIV. 43. [4] *Ibid*. f.n. 6.
[5] *JIH*. XV. 270; *Kāyastha Patrikā* (Bengali), Śrāvaṇa, 1344, pp. 111-13.
[6] I have discussed the question at length in *DUS*. I. No. II. pp. 131 ff.
[7] *IHQ*. XV. 508 ff. [8] *EI*. XXI. 173. [9] *IC*. I. 71.

kingdom for himself. The Dinajpur Pillar inscription (No. 48) refers to the rule of a Gauḍa king of Kāmboja lineage, and on palaeographic considerations it has to be referred to the tenth century A.D. Until the discovery of the Irdā copper-plate, the Dinajpur inscription was interpreted to refer to an invasion of Northern Bengal by the Kāmboja tribe. It is more reasonable to hold now, on the basis of these two inscriptions, that Nārāyaṇapāla and Nayapāla (and probably their successors) ruled over both Rāḍhā (Irdā Plate) and Varendra (Dinajpur Ins) *i.e.*, Northern and Western Bengal. Varendra, or at least a part of it, was in the possession of Gopāla II up to the sixth year of his reign,[1] and must have been conquered by Nārāyaṇapāla after that.

Different views have been entertained regaring the original home of the Kāmbojas. The Kāmboja is the name of a well-known tribe living from time immemorial in North-Western Frontier. It is reasonable to hold that the Kāmbojas of Bengal belonged to this tribe.[2] Evidently the great distance of these Kāmbojas from Bengal has induced scholars to look for Kāmbojas nearer that province. Mr. R. P. Chanda took Kāmboja to mean Tibet, and regarded the Kāmboja invader as coming from that or the neighbouring hilly region.[3] The late Tibetan chronicle *Pag Sam Jon Zang* locates a country called Kam-po-tsa (Kamboja) in the Upper and Eastern Lushai Hill tracts lying between Burma and Bengal, and Dr. H. C. Ray is inclined to the view that the Kāmbojas came to Bengal from this eastern region.[4]

On the other hand, N. Vasu identified Kāmboja with Cambay in the Bombay Presidency[5] and J. C. Ghosh supported this view.[6] Dr. B. R. Chatterji hints at the possibility of the Kāmboja invaders coming from Kāmbojadeśa, modern Cambodia in Indo-China.[7]

[1] Cf. Ins. No. 23.

[2] *EI.* XXII. 153; *IHQ.* XV 511; *DHNI.* I 311, f.n. 1; *DUS.* I. No. II. p. 131.

[3] *GR.* 37. The view that Tibet was called Kāmboja is based on a statement made by Foucher (*Icon.* 131) on the authority of the Nepalese Paṇḍit of B. H. Hodgson. But it is supported by two MSS. (Nos. 7763 and 7777) described in the *Catalogue of Sanskrit and Prākrit* MSS. *in the Library of India Office*, Vol. II, Part II.

[4] *IHQ.* XV. 511; *DHNI.* I. 309. f.n. 2.

[5] *VJI.* 172.

[6] *EI.* XXIV. 45.

[7] *Indian Cultural Influence in Cambodia*, pp. 278-79.

CHAPTER VII

MINOR INDEPENDENT KINGDOMS DURING THE PĀLA PERIOD

REFERENCE has been made in the last chapter to several independent and semi-independent powers that flourished in Bengal and Bihar during the period of the Pāla supremacy Among these the Chandras and the Varmans require a more detailed treatment.

I. THE CHANDRAS[1]

Lāmā Tāranātha, the Tibetan historian, gives prominence, in his *History of Buddhism,* to a long line of kings ruling in Bengal, whose names end in *-chandra* and who are specifically referred to as belonging to the Chandra dynasty. In fact. this is the only dynasty in Bengal, before the Pālas, to which he has referred in his book. His account of this dynasty has already been given above (*v. supra* pp. 182-84) and need not be referred to again.

The existence of a Chandra dynasty in Eastern Bengal from about the sixth to eighth century A.D., as recorded by Tāranātha, has not yet been corroborated by any reliable evidence. But it may be noted in this connection that inscriptions, coins, and Burmese chronicles testify to the rule of a long line of kings, with names ending in *-chandra*, in the Arakan region as early as the seventh century A.D. and perhaps even earlier.[2]

[1] The history of the Chandras is known from the following inscriptions (referred to in the text by number):

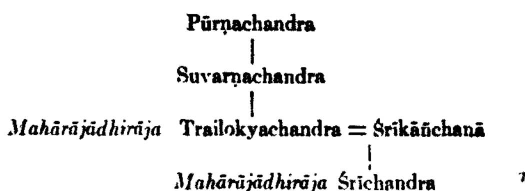
I. Bhārellā Ins. of Layahachandra, Year 18. *EI.* XVII. 349ff.
II. Rāmpāl CP. of Śrīchandra. Edited by Dr. R. G. Basak, first in *Sāhitya,* a Bengali journal, in 1320 B.S., and later, in *EI.* XII. 136-142. Edited by N. G. Majumdar in *IB.* pp. 1ff.
III. Kedārpur CP. of Śrīchandra. *EI.* XVII. 188-192; *IB.* 10 ff.
IV. Dhuliā CP. of Śrīchandra, Year 35. *IB.* 165-66.
V. Edilpur CP. of Śrīchandra. *Dacca Review* (October, 1912); *EI.* XVII. 189-90; *IB.* 166-67.

For a detailed discussion of the location of the Chandra kingdom and its capital, cf. *IHQ.* XVI. 225 ff., and also criticism of this view in *Bhāratavarsha,* Jyaishṭha, 1348, pp. 768ff.

[2] The traditional account of the nine Chandra kings of Arakan ruling from A.D. 788 to 957, as preserved in the later chronicles, is given by Phayre (*History of Burma,* p. 45). For the names of these kings and an account of the coins, cf. Phayre, *Coins of Arakan, of Pegu, and of Burma (Numismata Orientalia)* pp. 28-29, 43. A brief account of the inscriptions found on the platform of the Shitthaung

The first historical king in Eastern Bengal, with name ending in *-chandra,* is Layahachandradeva, mentioned in an inscription (No. I) incised on the pedestal of a huge image of Naṭeśa Śiva dug out of a tank in a village in the district of Tippera. The inscription records the consecration of the image by Bhāvudeva, son of Kusumadeva, in the 18th regnal year of Layahachandra. Dr. N. K. Bhattasali infers from the expression Karmmāntapāla, applied to Kusumadeva, that the latter was a vassal prince ruling over Karmmānta, and he identifies this place with modern Baḍkāmtā, about three miles to the south-west of the village where the image was found. This would definitely locate the kingdom of Layahachandra in the territory round about modern Comilla. But although doubts may justly be entertained regarding the interpretation of Karmmāntapāla by Dr. Bhattasali,[1] there cannot be any reasonable doubt that Layahachandra's kingdom comprised the territory round modern Comilla, as the huge image is not likely to have been removed to a long distance. The only clue for the date of Layahachandra is afforded by the alphabets of the inscription which have been referred to the latter half of the tenth century A.D. It would perhaps be safe to regard Layahachandra as ruling in the territory round about modern Comilla some time between 900 and 1000 A.D.

Next we come to know of a dynasty of Chandra kings from four inscriptions (Nos. II-V). They give us the following genealogy:



temple at Morahaung is given in *ASI.* 1925-26, pp. 146-47. The names of eighteen royal predecessors of Ānandachandra are given in one inscription. The first king is Bālachandra, a name also occurring in Tāranātha's account. According to Mr. Hirananda Śāstrī, the oldest inscription is written in characters resembling those of the late Gupta script. The inscription recording the names of the Chandra kings, mentioned above, is said to be 'many centuries older' than the temple which was built in the 16th century A.D. The name Prītichandra is found both on the coins as well as in the inscriptions. The name read by Phayre on the coin as 'Vammachandra' is clearly 'Dhammachandra.' The other name that can be read on the coins is Vīrachandra. The alphabets on these coins are to be referred to the seventh or eighth century A.D., if not earlier.

[1] Dr. Radhagovinda Basak interprets '*karmmānta*' as 'store of grain,' which is one of its ordinary meanings given in the lexicons, and regards Kusumadeva as an officer in charge of it (*EI.* XVII. 351). The word *karmmānta* is probably used in this sense in Gupta Ins. No. 80 (*CII.* III. 289).

All that we know of the origin and early history of the family is contained in the following passage in a verse occurring in Ins. Nos. II and IV.

"In the family of the Chandras, (*who were*) rulers of Rohitāgiri, and (*were*) possessed of enormous fortune, Pūrṇachandra, who was like the full moon, became illustrious in this world."

The verse seems to imply that Pūrṇachandra was an independent king. His forefathers are said to be rulers of Rohitāgiri, and the natural presumption is that Pūrṇachandra also ruled there. This presumption is strengthened by the fact that Trailokyachandra, the grandson of Pūrṇachandra, is said to have become king of Chandra-dvīpa. It would thus appear that Pūrṇachandra and his son Suvarṇachandra were both kings of Rohitāgiri.

Rohitāgiri is generally identified with Rohtasgarh in the Shahabad district of Bihar. But this identification is by no means certain, and, as Dr. N. K. Bhattasali has suggested, Rohitāgiri may be a Sanskritised form of *Lāl-māṭi* and refer to the Lalmai Hills near Comilla.[1] In any case, there is not sufficient reason to conclude that the Chandras came from outside Bengal, and in view of the traditions of the long line of Chandra kings ruling in Bhaṅgala or Eastern Bengal, it is more reasonable to hold that Rohitāgiri, the seat of the ancestral dominions of the Chandras, was somewhere in Eastern Bengal, and probably near Comilla.

According to verse 3 of the Rāmpāl copper-plate (No. II), "Suvarṇachandra became a follower of the Buddha." It is probable, therefore, that until his time the family followed Brahmanical religion. But henceforth the family was undoubtedly Buddhist, as is evidenced by the invocation to the Buddha at the beginning of all their copper-plate grants, the epithet *parama-saugata* before the names of kings, and the emblem of the Wheel of Law in their seal like that of the Pāla kings.

Both Suvarṇachandra and his father were presumably petty local rulers, but Suvarṇachandra's son Trailokyachandra laid the

[1] For the controversy about the correct reading of the name Rohitāgiri and its identification cf. *IHQ.* II. 317-18, 325-27, 655-56; III. 217, 418. The last letter (*ri*) of the name does not occur in Ins. No. II, but is clear in No. IV. The identification of Rohitāgiri with Rohtasgarh is generally accepted, but there is no definite evidence in support of it, and the correct form of the old name of Rohtasgarh is Rohitāśvagiri. The Lalmai Hills are about five miles to the west of Comilla, and extend for about eleven miles with an average height of about 30 feet, though some peaks rise to a height of 100 feet. An account of the locality and its antiquities is given by Dr. N. K. Bhattasali (Bhatt. *Cat.* pp. 9-11). It is interesting to note that two kings of Orissa, *viz.*, Gayāḍatuṅga and Vinītatuṅga II, refer in their records to Rohitāgiri as the home of their ancestors (*JBORS.* VI. 238; *JASB.* 1909, p. 347; 1916, p. 291; *IHQ.* II. 655).

foundations of the greatness of his family. In a verse occurring in two inscriptions (Nos. II and IV), he is said to have become king of Chandradvīpa, and is also described as "*ādhāro Harikela-rāja-kakuda-chchhatra-smitānāṁ śriyāṁ.*" This phrase has been differently interpreted. Dr. Basak takes it to mean "the support of the royal majesty smiling in the royal umbrella of the king of Harikela." Mr. N. G. Majumdar translates it as "the support of Fortune Goddesses (of other kings) smiling at (*i.e.*, joyful on account of) the umbrella which was the royal insignia of the king of Harikela." According to the first interpretation, Trailokyachandra was the *de facto*, if not *de jure*, ruler of Harikela, while according to the second, he was both *de facto* and *de jure* king of Harikela, with a number of other rulers subordinate to him. The latter view seems to be preferable. Thus Trailokyachandra added Chandradvīpa and Harikela to his paternal dominions, and felt justified in assuming the title *Mahārājādhirāja*. His son Śrīchandra who assumed the full imperial titles *Parama-saugata, Parameśvara, Paramabhaṭṭāraka, Mahārājādhirāja* presumably inherited his father's dominions, and possibly added to them. Although all the four copper-plate grants of the family belong to the reign of Śrīchandra, practically nothing is known of his reign beyond the fact that he ruled for thirty-five years. The history of the family also ends with him, as we have no definite knowledge either of his successor or of the fate of his kingdom.

The data furnished by the inscriptions enable us to form a rough idea of the extent of the kingdom of Śrīchandra. Chandradvīpa and Harikela, over which he ruled, may be regarded as covering approximately the whole of Eastern Bengal and the coastal regions of Southern Bengal.[1] All the four copper-plate grants were issued from Vikramapura, which presumably became the capital of the family either during the reign of Trailokyachandra or that of his son Śrīchandra. In two of the inscriptions (Nos. II and IV) of Śrīchandra, the lands granted were situated in the Pauṇḍravardhana-*bhukti*. This does not necessarily mean that Śrīchandra's supremacy extended over North Bengal. For although originally that was the connotation of Pauṇḍravardhana-*bhukti*, later (*e.g.*, during the time of the Senas), it included the whole of Southern Bengal right up to the sea, and this might have been the case even in the time of Śrīchandra. The land granted by Ins. No. V was situated in the

[1] *Supra*, pp. 17-18; also *supra* pp. 134-35. According to some old Bengali texts, Chandradvīpa was bounded by the Padmā and the Baleswar rivers on the north and the west and the sea in the south (*Miśri-grantha* quoted in *Bākla* by R. K. Sen, p. 147).

Kumāratālaka-*maṇḍala* in the Samataṭa-Padmāvāṭī-*vishaya*. The latter seems to refer to the well-known river Padmā, and the name of the *maṇḍala* is perhaps connected with the river Kumāra, and still preserved in Kumārakhāli, in Faridpur district, not far from the old bed of the river Padmā. Thus the details of the land-grants confirm the view, mentioned above, about the extent of Śrīchandra's dominions.

As to the date of Śrīchandra, we have to rely entirely upon the scripts of his inscriptions, which may be assigned to the close of the tenth or beginning of the eleventh century A.D.[1]

Another king, with name ending in *-chandra*, namely Govindachandra of Vaṅgāḷa-deśa is known from the accounts of Rājendra Choḷa's invasion of Bengal.[2]

As the name of Vaṅgāla-deśa occurs immediately after Takkaṇalāḍam *i.e.* Southern Rāḍhā, there is no doubt that Vaṅgāla-deśa refers to Southern Bengal. That Govindachandra ruled also in Eastern Bengal is proved by two inscriptions, dated in his 12th and 23rd year,[3] recently discovered in Vikrampur, within the district of Dacca. It would thus follow that Govindachandra practically ruled over the whole of the dominions of Śrīchandra. As Rājendra Choḷa's invasion took place about 1021 A.D., it is very probable that Govindachandra immediately succeeded Śrīchandra. But, as in the case of Layahachandra, there is no evidence to connect Govindachandra with the family of Śrīchandra, though it is not unlikely that either or both of them were members of that royal family. At all events, the six Chandra kings, known from inscriptions, may be regarded as having ruled in Eastern or Southern Bengal (and some over both) during the period between 900 and 1050 A.D.

A study of the Kalachuri records shows that the Chandra kingdom had to bear the brunt of the invasions of the valorous Kalachuri kings. Kokkalla[4] claims to have raided the treasuries of Vaṅga,[5] and his great-grandson Lakshmaṇarāja is credited with the conquest of Vaṅgāla.[6] It is doubtful whether the Chandras had founded their kingdom at the time of Kokkalla's conquest, but it is not unlikely that they took advantage of this political catastrophe

[1] This is the view of Mr. N. G. Majumdar (*IB.* I). Mr. R. D. Banerji (*AJV*, Part 3, pp. 210-22) refers the script to the tenth and Dr. R. G. Basak to the eleventh and twelfth centuries A.D. (*EI.* XII. 137).

[2] *Supra* pp. 138-39.

[3] The inscription dated in the 23rd year has been published in *Bhāratavarsha*, Jyaishṭha, 1348 B.S. pp. 768 ff. The other inscription, yet unpublished, is in the Dacca Museum.

[4] For the date of Kokkalla cf. *supra* p. 128, f.n. 4.

[5] *EI.* XIX. 75, 78.

[6] *EI.* XI. 142.

to consolidate their rule in Bengal. The king of the Vaṅgālas, defeated by Lakshmaṇarāja, seems, however, almost certainly to have been a Chandra ruler. The great Kalachuri ruler Karṇa (1041–*c.* 1070 A.D.) is also credited with successful military campaign against Vaṅga, and is said to have achieved a decisive victory over the king of the Eastern country[1] who probably lost his life in the fierce fight. In both cases, the reference seems to be to the Chandra kingdom, and the adversary of Karṇa was most probably Govinda-chandra or his successor. It is very likely that the Chandra kingdom was finally destroyed by the invasions of Karṇa.[2] In any case, it does not appear in the history of Bengal after the middle of the eleventh century A.D.

II. THE VARMANS

There is hardly any doubt that the Varman dynasty succeeded the Chandras in Eastern Bengal. Our information about this dynasty is derived chiefly from a single inscription, the Belāva copper-plate of Bhojavarman.[3] It begins with the Purāṇic genealogy of Yadu from Brahmā through Atri, Chandra, Budha, Purūravas, Āyu, Nahusha and Yayāti. Reference is then made to Hari, of the family of Yadu, who appeared as Kṛishṇa. The relatives of Hari were the Varmans who were zealous in their support of the three Vedas and dominated over Siṁhapura.

The Varman kings of Bengal thus claim to be descended from a branch of the Yādava dynasty ruling over Siṁhapura. Various opinions have been entertained regarding the location of Siṁhapura, and the choice seems to lie between three known cities bearing that name: one to the north of the Salt Range in the Punjab;[4] a second in Kaliṅga, perhaps identical with the modern Siṅgupuram between Chicacole and Narasannapeṭa;[5] and the third in Rāḍhā, generally identified with Singur in the Hooghly district.[6] The first is too far away, and there is no evidence that it existed after the seventh century A.D. The third is only known from the legendary account

[1] Bheraghat Ins. v. 12 (*EI.* II. 11. 15); Rewa Stone Ins. v. 23 (*EI.* XXIV. 105, 112).

[2] This point will be further discussed in connection with the history of the Varmans in the next section.

[3] *EI.* XII 37; *IB.* 14.

[4] According to the Lakkhāmaṇḍal Praśasti (*EI.* I. 10-15), the queen of Jālandhara (Punjab) was descended from a line of Yādava kings of Siṁhapura, and this Siṁhapura has been identified by Bühler with Seng-ha-pu-lo in the Punjab mentioned by Hiuen Tsang (Watters I. 248-49). R. D. Banerji points out that there were other towns of this name, *e.g.*, one in Malwa (*JASB.* N.S. X. 124).

[5] *EI.* IV. 143.

[6] *Supra* p. 30.

of Vijayasiṁha, contained in *Mahāvaṁsa,* which can hardly be accepted as sober history. The kingdom of Siṁhapura in Kaliṅga, on the other hand, is known to exist as early as the fifth century A.D., and as late as the twelfth century A.D.[1]

The probability, therefore, lies in favour of the kingdom of Siṁhapura in Kaliṅga being the original home of the Varman kings of Bengal.[2] It may be noted that kings with names ending in *-varman* are known to have ruled in this kingdom of Siṁhapura[3] in the fifth century A.D., though they never claimed to belong to the Yādava dynasty.

How the Varmans came to occupy Eastern Bengal is not told in the Belāva copper-plate. But the way in which it refers to the conquests of Jātavarman hardly leaves any doubt that it was during his reign that the foundations were laid of the greatness of the family. As a matter of fact, he seems to have been the first independent ruler of the dynasty, as his father, Vajravarman, the first ancestor named in the grant, is not referred to as a king, though he is eulogised as a brave warrior, a poet among poets, and a scholar among scholars.[4]

The conquests of Jātavarman are referred to in a poetic way in the following passage in Belāva Grant :

> "He spread his paramount sovereignty, by eclipsing (even) the glory of Pṛithu son of Veṇa, marrying Vīraśrī (daughter) of Karṇa, by extending his domination over the Aṅgas, by humiliating the dignity of Kāmarūpa, by bringing to disgrace the strength of the arms of Divya, by damaging the fortune of Govardhana, and by vesting wealth in Brahmans versed in the Vedas" (v. 8).

Karṇa, whose daughter Vīraśrī was married by Jātavarman, was undoubtedly the Kalachuri king of that name who ruled from

[1] Two kings of Kaliṅga. *Mahārāja* Chaṇḍavarman and *Mahārāja* Umavarman, ruling between 350 and 550 A.D., issued their Grants from Siṁhapura (*DUS.* II, No. II. pp. 2. 3. 9-10). According to Siṁhalese inscriptions, the two kings Niśśaṅkamalla and Sāhasamalla, the second of whom ascended the throne in A.D. 1200, were sons of the Kaliṅga king Goparāja of Siṁhapura. According to *Mahāvaṁsa,* Tilokasundarī, queen of Vijayabāhu I (acc. c. 1059 A.D.) was a princess of Kaliṅga, and three relatives of her came to Ceylon from Siṁhapura (*EI.* XII. 4).

[2] Dr. D. C. Ganguly maintains that Siṁhapura may be located in Eastern Bengal, and be even regarded as the capital of the Varmans. He contends that there is nothing in v. 5 of the Belāva Grant to warrant the assertion that Siṁhapura was the original home of the Varmans and lay outside Bengal (*IHQ.* XII. 608-9).

[3] Cf. Chaṇḍavarman and Umavarman in f.n. 1 *supra.*

[4] Both Mr. R. D. Banerji and Dr. D. C. Ganguly maintain that the Varman kingdom in Eastern Bengal was founded by Vajravarman. (*BI.* 276; *IHQ.* v. 225). Mr. R. D. Banerji, however, formerly stated that there is nothing to show that Vajravarman was a king himself (*JASB.* N.S. x. 124).

A.D. 1041 to *c.* 1070 A.D.[1] It may be remembered that another daughter of the same king was married by the Pāla king Vigrahapāla III. This enables us to place the reign of Jātavarman, with a tolerable degree of certainty, in the second half, probably the third quarter, of the eleventh century A.D.

Of the defeated enemies mentioned in the above passage, we can easily identify Divya with the great Kaivarta leader who usurped the throne of the Pālas as the result of a successful revolt against Mahīpāla II.[2] It is obvious that Jātavarman took full advantage of the anarchy and confusion that set in after that revolt, and carved out a kingdom for himself. As the Aṅga country, conquered by him, was almost certainly under the Pālas, it appears that he fought against both the Pālas and the rebellious chief Divya. It is presumably by his victory over both that he gained the kingdom of Eastern Bengal, though there is also the possibility that he first secured the kingdom of Eastern Bengal, and then turned his arms against them. His struggle with Kāmarūpa, evidently leading to no decisive result, must have taken place after his conquest of Eastern Bengal. Govardhana, whose fortune is said to have been damaged by him, cannot be identified with certainty.[3] Most probably he was another adventurer like Jātavarman who tried to fish in the troubled waters of Bengal.

It is difficult to believe that Jātavarman, a petty chief coming from outside, could have undertaken all these military expeditions on his own account. It has accordingly been suggested that he accompanied the Kalachuri king Karṇa in his expedition against Bengal.[4] Perhaps it would be more reasonable to regard him as a

[1] The date of the death of Karṇa is not definitely known, but it must have taken place in or before 1073 A.D., the earliest known date of his successor (*DHNI.* II. 777, 782).

[2] Perhaps a reminiscence of the fight between Divya and Jātavarman is preserved in a Nālandā Stone Ins. (*EI.* XXI. 97). It relates about an ascetic of Somapura (Pāhārpur in Rajshahi district) that "when his house was burning, (being) set on fire by the approaching armies of Vaṅgāla, he attached (himself) to the pair of lotus feet of the Buddha (and) went to heaven." It would then follow that Jātavarman invaded Northern Bengal (*IC.* VI. 55; *supra* p. 30).

[3] Dr. R. G. Basak's suggestion that this Govardhana may be the father of Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva, the prime-minister of Harivarman (*EI.* XII. 38), has been endorsed by Dr. H. C. Ray (*DHNI.* I. 335) and Mr. R. D. Banerji, but the assumption involves too many difficulties and rests on very slender foundations. Mr. Banerji has made an alternative suggestion that Govardhana may be the ruler of Kauśāmbī, who helped Rāmapāla in his fight against Bhīma, and whose name, probably through copyist's mistake occurs as Dvorapavardhana (*JASB.* N.S. x. 124).

[4] R. D. Banerji suggested that Vajravarman accompanied one of the three foreign conquerors of Bengal, *viz.*, Rājendra Choḷa, Jayasiṁha II, or Gāṅgeyadeva (*BI.* 276; *JASB.* N.S. x. 124). Mr. P. L. Paul suggests that Jātavarman followed

follower of both Gāṅgeyadeva and his son Karṇa. Gāṅgeya claims to have defeated the rulers of both Aṅga and Utkala,[1] and Karṇa is said to have exercised some sort of supremacy over Gauḍa, Vaṅga, and Kaliṅga.[2] The Paikor inscription[3] proves that Karṇa's conquests certainly extended up to the Bhāgīrathī river, and the Rewa Stone inscription[4] refers to his complete victory over a king of an eastern country, probably Vaṅga. If we assume Jātavarman to have been the ruler of Siṁhapura in Orissa, he might have joined the great Kalachuri rulers in their eastern expeditions, and ultimately carved out an independent kingdom for himself in Eastern Bengal by supplanting the Chandras. Jātavarman's claim to have conquered the Aṅgas and defeated Divya might mean no more than that he took part in the battles of Gāṅgeya and Karṇa against Aṅga and Gauḍa, and the same may be the case in regard to his defeat of Govardhana. It must be remembered, however, that all this is pure conjecture, and we do not possess sufficient data to arrive at a definite conclusion about the sudden rise of this military adventurer to fame and power in Bengal.

Immediately after Jātavarman the Belāva copper-plate mentions his son by Vīraśrī, named Sāmalavarmadeva. The natural presumption, therefore, is that Jātavarman was succeeded by Sāmalavarman. A fragment of a copper-plate of Sāmalavarman, recently discovered at Vajrayoginī,[5] raises, however, some doubts on this point, and makes it probable that Jātavarman was succeeded by king Harivarman.

The name of Harivarman was known long ago from colophons of two Buddhist manuscripts, copied respectively in his 19th[6] and

Karṇa into Bengal. He even proposes the identification of Jātavarman with the 'illustrious Jāṭa' who is said in the Rewa Ins. of Malayasiṁha to have helped Karṇadeva in vanquishing his foes (*IHQ*. XII. 473). Professor V. V. Mirashi, while editing the Rewa Stone Ins. of Karṇa (*EI*. XXIV. 105) remarks in connection with v. 23: "Stripped of its metaphor, the verse means that Karṇa achieved a decisive victory over the king of the Eastern country, who lost his life in the fierce fight." From this he infers "that Karṇa killed the last king of the Chandra dynasty, who was either Govindachandra or his successor, placed Vajravarman in charge of the newly acquired territory, and married his daughter to Jātavarman to cement the political alliance." If this view is accepted, the Chandras must have been supplanted by the Varmans before 1048-49 A.D., the date of the Rewa Ins.

[1] *DHNI*. II. 772. [2] *Ibid*. 778.

[3] *ASI*. 1921-22, pp. 78-80. [4] See *supra* p. 199, f.n. 4.

[5] An account of this plate is given by Dr. N. K. Bhattasali in the Bengali journal *Bhāratavarsha* (Kārtika, 1340, pp. 674 ff). Only a fourth part of the plate—the right lower half—has been recovered, containing last parts of fifteen lines on the obverse, and first parts of fifteen lines on the reverse.

[6] *PB*. 97; *IB*. 28.

39th[1] regnal years. In the former he is given the titles *Mahārājādhirāja, Parameśvara, Paramabhaṭṭāraka*. He is mentioned in the Bhuvaneśvara inscription of his minister Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva,[2] and is also known from the Sāmantasāra copper-plate grant[3] issued by him from Vikramapura. The plate gives him all the imperial titles, and refers to his father's name, which was formerly read by Mr. N. Vasu as Jyotirvarman, and now doubtfully restored by Dr. Bhattasali as Jātavarman.[4] If this latter reading is correct, he must be regarded as a brother of Sāmalavarman. This view is strengthened by the Vajrayoginī fragmentary copper-plate, mentioned above, which contains the names of both Harivarman and Sāmalavarman. Unfortunately, the portion of the record indicating the relation between the two is missing. But as the plate seems to have been issued in the reign of Sāmalavarmadeva, Harivarman presumably flourished before him. The view, based on Dr. Bhattasali's tentative reading of Jātavarman in the Sāmantasāra Plate, that Harivarman was the elder brother and predecessor of Sāmalavarman, may be accepted for the present, as a reasonable working hypothesis, although it cannot be regarded as an established fact.

The only definite information that we possess about Harivarman

[1] This MS. is described in Śāstrī-*Cat*. I. 79. The date is given in the post-colophon as "*Mahārājādhirāja Śrīmat-Harivarmma-deva-pādīya samvat 39.*" This is followed by three verses, written in a different hand, according to which 'when forty-six years of Harivarman had elapsed,' the MS. was five times recited (?) in seven years on the bank of the Veng river. Although the meaning of the latter part is not certain, the reference to 46 years is important. The first expression denoting date may mean 39th regnal year or year 39 of an era founded by Harivarman. No such era is known, but the absence of any reference to *Vijaya-rājya etc.* is striking. If 39 is taken as regnal year, 46 should also be taken as regnal year, and it would show that Harivarman ruled at least for 46 years.

The river Veng is placed by MM. H. P. Śāstrī in Jessore. If true, it probably indicates that Central Bengal was included in the kingdom of Harivarman.

[2] *IB*. 25 ff.

[3] The Grant was originally edited by late Mr. N. N. Vasu (*VJI*. II. 215). Mr. Vasu gave a very indistinct photograph and a tentative reading of the inscription, according to which the Grant was issued from Vikramapura and belonged to the reign of *Parama-Vaishṇava, Parameśvara, Parama-bhaṭṭāraka, Mahārājādhirāja* Harivarman, son and successor of *Mahārājādhirāja* Jyotirvarman. The plate was lost sight of for a long time, but was recently traced in Sāmantasāra, a village in the Faridpur district, and purchased for the Dacca Museum. The plate was evidently burnt, and has become almost illegible. Dr. N. K. Bhattasali has given a short account of it in *Bhāratavarsha* (Māgha, 1344, p. 169). The name Harivarman is quite clear, but Dr. Bhattasali is definite that the regnal year 42, read by Mr. Vasu, does not occur in the inscription.

[4] Dr. Bhattasali remarks that the only letter in the name that can be distinctly read is *-rmma*, and all the other letters are hopelessly indistinct. He adds that the proposed restoration of the name as 'Jātavarmman' should not be regarded as a definite conclusion (*op. cit.* p. 171).

is that he ruled over Eastern Bengal with Vikramapura[1] as his capital, and that he had a long reign extending over forty-six years or even more. It has already been suggested above, that the chief Hari, to whom great prominence is given in the *Rāmacharita*, and who allied himself first with Bhīma and then with Rāmapāla, was probably the Varman ruler Harivarman, and that he is to be identified with the Varman king who, for his own safety, propitiated Rāmapāla by gift of chariot and elephants.[2] Harivarman was succeeded by his son, but his name is not known.[3]

A few words may be said of Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva, the great Brāhmaṇa minister of Harivarman who has left a long account of himself and seven generations of his family in the stone inscription referred to above. The family was settled in the village Siddhala in Rāḍhā. Ādideva, the grandfather of Bhavadeva, was a minister to his Royal Majesty, the king of Vaṅga. The name of the king is not mentioned, but he may be Jātavarman. Bhavadeva's father Govardhana was a great scholar and warrior, but does not seem to have held any high office. Bhavadeva himself was the minister of peace and war to Harivarman, and probably also to his son. He was also known as *Bāla-Balabhī-bhujaṅga*. The first part of the compound is the name of a kingdom, also referred to in *Rāmacharita*. but the exact sense of the expression is difficult to understand. The inscription gives a detailed account of his profound learning in various branches of knowledge, and that this is no mere empty boast is proved by at least two extant Smṛiti treatises composed by him. On the whole Bhavadeva must be regarded as a remark-

[1] This follows from Mr. Vasu's reading "*iha khalu Vikramapura-samāvāsita*" in the Sāmantasāra copper-plate. Dr. Bhattasali (*op. cit.*) has accepted this reading, but it appears from what he says on p. 171, that only the words '*pura-samāvāsita*' are now legible on the plate and that the word '*Vikrama*,' preceding it, cannot be read distinctly.

[2] See *supra* pp. 159-60.

[3] The son of Harivarman is referred to in v. 16 of the Bhuvaneśvara *praśasti*, and perhaps also in the fragmentary Vajrayoginī copper-plate. Mr. N. G. Majumdar concluded from verse 15 of the Bhuvaneśvara Ins. of Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva that either Harivarman or his son 'made himself master of Utkala by overthrowing the Nāgavaṁśī dynasty which ruled over Bastar in Central Provinces in the eleventh century A.D.' (*IB*. 29-30). This point has already been discussed above (*supra* p. 161, f.n. 1). He further maintained, on the strength of certain verses (III. 42-44) of *Rāmacharita*, that 'Rāmapāla encountered somewhere in Orissa Harivarman of Bengal or his son' (*IB*. 30). The view that Harivarman or his son ruled in Orissa is primarily based on the stone inscription of his minister Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva. There is nothing in the record itself to connect Harivarman or Bhavadeva with Orissa, but the generally accepted view that the inscription was 'originally fixed on the temple of Ananta-Vāsudeva at Bhuvaneśvara in the Puri district, Orissa,' led scholars to suppose that the pious constructions referred to in the inscription were situated in the same locality, and Harivarman's political supremacy

able personality combining in himself the high qualities of a statesman, warrior, scholar, and author.[1]

Hardly anything is known of the son of Harivarman or of the circumstances under which the kingdom passed to Sāmalavarman, the other son of Jātavarman. But Sāmalavarman is one of the few kings of Bengal who have survived in local traditions. The Vaidika Brahmans of Bengal claim that their ancestors first settled in Bengal during the reign of Sāmalavarman, though, according to one version of the story, the event took place during the reign of Harivarman. According to most of the genealogical books of the Vaidika Brahmans, the first of their line came to Bengal at the invitation of Sāmalavarman in Śaka 1001 (=1079 A.D.). This date, correct within half a century, shows that some genuine traditions about Sāmalavarman were preserved in Bengal.

We learn from the Belāva copper-plate that Sāmalavarman had many queens, the chief among them being Mālavyadevī.[2] By her he had a son called Bhojavarman who issued the Belāva copper-plate grant in the fifth year of his reign from his capital city Vikramapura. He is given the imperial titles and the epithet '*parama-Vaishṇava*.' This, as well as the reference to *Vishṇu-chakra-mudrā* in line 48, proves that the family were Vaishṇavas.

extended over this region. To Mr. P. Acharya belongs the credit of removing the century-old misapprehension about the original situation of the stone inscription. He has shown by cogent arguments the erroneous character of the belief that the stone slab containing the inscription was ever fixed on any temple at Bhuvaneśvara. He has also shown the unreliable character of the literary evidence cited by Mr. N. Vasu in favour of the supposition that Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva erected temples and did other pious works in Orissa (*Proc. Ind. Hist. Congress*, 3rd Session, pp. 287 ff). In view of Mr. Acharya's explanation, we cannot regard either Harivarman or his son as ruler of Orissa, until more positive evidence is forthcoming than the very doubtful interpretation of verse 15 of Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva's inscription. For even if we endorse the view of Mr. N. G. Majumdar that the verse in question refers to the defeat of the Nāgas by Bhavadeva, we should look for their territory near Eastern Bengal, and it is more reasonable to identify them with the Nāgās of Assam hills.

[1] For details about Bhavadeva's scholarship cf. *IB*. pp. 30-31 ; also Ch. XI *infra*.

[2] The verses 9-11 of the Belāva copper-plate are rather difficult to understand. According to the interpretation of MM. H. P. Śāstri and R. D. Banerji (*JASB*. N.S. X. 125), Mālavyadevī was the daughter of Jagadvijayamalla, son of Udayin. According to Dr. R. G. Basak, Mālavyadevī was the daughter of Udayin (*EI*. XII. 42). According to Mr. N. G. Majumdar and Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar, Mālavyadevī was the daughter of Jagadvijayamalla, and Udayin was the son of Sāmalavarman by another queen (*IB*. 191).

MM. Śāstrī further identifies Udayin and Jagadvijayamalla respectively with the Paramāra king Udayāditya and his son Jagaddeva or Jagdeo and Mr. Banerji is also inclined to take the same view. This view is also endorsed by Dr. D. C. Ganguly in his *History of the Paramāras* (p. 141). As Udayāditya ruled during

They were orthodox supporters of the Vedas, as already mentioned above, and the replacement of the Buddhist dynasty of the Chandras by the orthodox Brahmanical dynasty of the Varmans was fully in keeping with the spirit of the times. It may not be a mere coincidence that the two Buddhist ruling dynasties in Bengal, *viz.*, the Pālas and the Chandras, were supplanted by two foreign dynasties (Senas and Varmans) of orthodox faith within a century.

The land granted by Bhojavarman was situated in the Pauṇḍra-*bhukti* and Kauśāmbī-Ashṭagachchha-*khaṇḍala*. Reference has already been made to a capital city called Kauśāmbī in connection with the feudatories of Rāmapāla. If Kauśāmbī of this inscription is identical with that, Bhojavarman's kingdom might have included a portion of Varendra, the Pauṇḍravardhana-*bhukti par excellence*. But this is by no means certain.[1] For all we know, the kingdom of the Varmans might have been confined to Eastern Bengal with Vikramapura as its capital.

As already noted above, Jātavarman must have flourished in the second-half, and probably in the third-quarter, of the eleventh century A.D. If he was succeeded by Harivarman who had a long reign of at least forty-six years, Sāmalavarman and Bhojavarman must have ruled in the first-half of the twelfth century A.D. There is little doubt that the Varmans were ousted from East Bengal by the Senas during, or shortly after, the reign of Bhojavarman.

the last quarter of the eleventh century A.D., there is no chronological difficulty in the proposed identification, but the difference between the names Jagaddeva and Jagadvijayamalla cannot be ignored. Besides, the interpretation of MM. Śāstrī and Mr. Banerji involves the emendation of the word '*tasya*' in v. 10 of the Belāva copper-plate as '*tathā*.' On the whole, it would be safe not to accept definitely the proposed identification until further evidence is available.

Attention may also be drawn in this connection to the expression '*Trailokya-sundarī*' in v. 11. In all the interpretations referred to above, the word has been taken as an adjective to Mālavyadevī, meaning "the most beautiful in the three worlds." It is, however, possible to interpret the verse so as to make Trailokyasundarī the name of the daughter of Sāmalavarman and Mālavyadevī. Indeed this was the interpretation originally proposed by Mr. N. G. Majumdar (*IB.* 23). In this connection he remarked: "The name Trailokyasundarī is by no means uncommon. One of the queens of Vijayabāhu I of Ceylon was a princess of Kaliṅga named Tilokasundarī" (*IB.* 18). Now, according to the *Mahāvaṁsa*, Vijayabāhu married Tilokasundarī of the Kaliṅga royal race. If we identify Siṁhapura, the homeland of the Varmans of Bengal, with the royal city of that name in Kaliṅga, it would not be unreasonable to identify Trailokyasundarī, daughter of Sāmalavarman, with the queen of Vijayabāhu. Apart from agreement in dates, it would explain the very queer reference to the calamity befalling the king of Laṅkā, and a prayer for his welfare in v. 14 of the Belāva copper-plate of Bhojavarman. It is difficult to explain this reference to the king of Laṅkā unless there was some association between that kingdom and the Varmans.

[1] See *supra* p. 158 and f.n. 3.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SENAS

I. The Origin of the Sena Kings

The Sena family, that ruled in Bengal after the Pālas, appears from the official records to have originally belonged to Karṇāṭa in South India. According to the Deopārā inscription,[1] Vīrasena and others, born in the family of the Moon, were rulers of the Southern region[2] whose achievements were sung by Vyāsa, and in that Sena family was born Sāmantasena, the head-garland of the Brahma-Kshatriyas. The same account is repeated in the Mādhāinagar Grant[3] in a slightly modified form :

> "In the family of Vīrasena, which has become illustrious through the legends recorded in the Purāṇas, was born Sāmantasena, the head-garland of the clan of the Karṇṇāṭa-Kshatriyas."

The Karṇāṭa origin is further supported by the statement in the Deopārā inscription (v. 8) that Sāmantasena 'slaughtered the wicked despoilers of the Lakshmī (*i.e.* wealth) of Karṇāṭa' in battles waged in Southern India.[4]

These statements leave no doubt that the original home of the family was in Karṇāṭa, *i.e.* the region in modern Mysore and Hyderabad States where Kanarese is the spoken language, and that it belonged to the well-known 'Brahma-Kshatri' caste.

[1] vv. 4-5 (*IB.* 46, 50; *EI.* I. 305).

[2] The original expression is "*Dākshiṇātya-kshauṇīndra.*" Mr. N. G. Majumdar translates it as "kings of the Deccan." I have followed Kielhorn.

[3] v. 4 (*IB.* 110, 113).

[4] Dr. D. C. Ganguly maintains that v. 8 of the Deopārā Ins. "does not indicate that the fight between Sāmantasena and the despoiler of the Lakshmī of the Karṇāṭa country took place in the Karṇāṭa country. It simply means that Sāmantasena vanquished a king or a freebooter, who had already plundered the Karṇāṭa country." Later he suggests that possibly Rājendra Choḷa, who had already defeated the Karṇāṭa king, was repulsed by Sāmantasena somewhere in Northern Rāḍhā in which the latter's kingdom was situated (*IHQ.* XII. 611-12).

Dr. Ganguly overlooks the very significant statement (v. 8) of the poet that Sāmantasena slaughtered the hostile soldiers to such an extent that the lord of goblins did not leave the southern quarter. This undoubtedly implies that the dead bodies of the enemy's soldiers lay in the south, and therefore the battle also must have been waged in that region. The same inference may be made from the other statement (v. 5) of the poet that war-ballads were sung in honour of

After referring to the martial exploits of Sāmantasena in South India, the Deopārā inscription adds that "in his last days he frequented the sacred hermitages situated in forests on the banks of the Ganges" (v. 9). As Sāmantasena's descendants ruled in Bengal, it is natural to conclude from the above that he was the first of the Karṇāṭa-Sena family to migrate from the south and settle in Bengal. But this view is opposed to the following statement in the Naihati copper-plate:[1]

> "In his (*i.e.* Moon's) prosperous family were born princes, who adorned Rāḍhā (*i.e.* Western Bengal)........and in their family was born the mighty Sāmantasena."

This certainly implies that the Sena family had settled in Western Bengal before Sāmantasena was born.

The only way to reconcile these contradictory statements is to suppose that a Sena family from Karṇāṭa had settled in Western Bengal but kept itself in touch with its motherland; that one of its members, Sāmantasena, spent his early life in Karṇāṭa, distinguishing himself in various warfares in South India, and betook himself in old age to the family seat in Bengal. Evidently his exploits made the family so powerful that his son was able to carve out a kingdom in Bengal; for Hemantasena, the son of Sāmantasena, is the first of the family to whom royal epithets are given in the family records. It is true that Sāmantasena's predecessors are referred to as princes who ruled over the surface of the earth,[2] but beyond these vague general phrases there is nothing to indicate that they really held the rank of independent kings.

The records of the Senas call them Brahma-Kshatriya,[3] Karṇāṭa-Kshatriya,[4] and sometimes simply Kshatriya.[5] The term Brahma-Kshatriya, applied to the Senas, was first correctly explained

Sāmantasena near Setubandha-Rāmeśvara. Reference like this indicates a region near the battlefield (*cf. e.g.*, Aphsaḍ Stone Ins. I. 11. *CII.* III. 203).

Mr. G. M. Sarkar holds a diametrically opposite view to that of Dr. Ganguly. He maintains "that Sāmantasena's activity was confined only to the southern region," and that he "was in no way connected with any part of Bengal" (*JL.* XVI. 6, 8).

[1] vv. 3-4 (*IB.* 71-72, 76).

[2] In Barrackpur CP., v. 3 (*IB.* 61-62, 64), and Mādhāinagar CP., v. 3 (*IB.* 110, 113), the predecessors of Sāmantasena are called kings in a general way. In Naihati CP. (v. 3) alone (*IB.* 71-72, 76), these princes are specifically said to have adorned Rāḍhā. It is, therefore, difficult to conclude definitely, as Dr. D. C Ganguly has done, that the fore-fathers of Sāmantasena were royal personages in the Deccan (*IHQ.* XII. 611).

[3] Deopārā Ins. v. 5 (*IB.* 46);

[4] Mādhāinagar CP. v. 4 (*IB.* 110).

[5] Barrackpur CP. v. 4 (*IB.* 62).

by Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar as denoting the well-known caste Brahma-Kshatri. He has shown that no less than five royal families were designated Brahma-Kshatri. The nomenclature was given to 'those who were Brāhmaṇas first and became Kshatriyas afterwards' *i.e.*, 'those who exchanged their priestly for martial pursuits.'[1] There are broad hints in the Sena records that this was true of the Sena family. Sāmantasena is called *Brahma-vādī*,[2] a term usually applied to one who teaches or expounds the Vedas, but the poet uses it to signify his skill in the extermination of opposing soldiers. In the Mādhāinagar Grant,[3] the Sena princes are said to have "made preparations for sacrifices (*kratu*) befitting a conquest of the three worlds and thereby checked the priests serving in the Sessional Soma sacrifices of the gods." Here, again, technical Brahmanical terms are used to denote the martial exploits. Mr. N. G. Majumdar very rightly remarked with reference to the word '*Brahma-vādī*,' that 'here probably it is indicated that Sāmantasena was as much Brāhmaṇa as Kshatriya, thus bringing out the etymological meaning of Brahma-Kshatriya *i.e.* Brāhmaṇa as well as Kshatriya.[4] The same remark might apply to the other expression in the Mādhāinagar Grant.

In this connection, it is interesting to note that a number of epigraphic records refer to one or more lines of Jaina teachers belonging to 'Sena family,' settled in the Dharwar district in the heart of the Karṇāṭa country. The names of these teachers all end in *-sena*, and the family is specifically named *Senānvaya*, and in one case also *Chandra-kavāṭānvaya*. About eleven members of this family are known to us who flourished between *c.* 850 and *c.* 1050 A.D. One of the earliest of them is Vīrasena, a name which is recorded as that of a remote ancestor of the Senas in the Deopārā inscription. All these make it highly probable that the Senas of Bengal belonged to this Karṇāṭaka family of Jaina teachers, but, in the absence of any positive evidence, it cannot be regarded as anything more than a mere hypothesis.[5]

The brief account of the early history of the Senas recorded above raises one important question. How could the Karṇāṭa

[1] *IB.* 44 and f.n. 3, App. p. 192. [2] Deopārā Ins. v. 5 (*IB.* 46, 50-51).
[3] v. 3 (*IB.* 109-110, 113). [4] *IB.* 51. f.n. 1.
[5] For a fuller discussion of this matter cf. *PTOC.* II. Calcutta (1922). pp. 343 ff. For *Chandra-kavāṭānvaya*, cf. *EI.* XVI. 55. Winternitz refers to a Jaina Kanakasena (10th cent. A.D.) as the author of *Yaśodhara-charita* (*Hist. Ind. Lit.* II. 338). Cf. also *ASI.* 1921-22, p. 114; *Ep. Car.* IX. 145. Ins. Nos. 69, 70; p. 173, No. 34. It must be understood that even if this theory be adopted, it leaves open the question whether the priestly family took to Kshatriya profession before or after its migration to Bengal.

family of the Senas come to settle and wield royal power in Bengal? While it is impossible to give a definite answer to this question, we may refer to several circumstances which would render such a thing quite feasible.

It appears from the Pāla records that they employed foreigners who were numerous enough to be specifically mentioned in the inscriptions. Thus the phrase '*Gauḍa-Mālava-Khaśa-Hūṇa-Kulika-Karṇāṭa-Lāṭa-chāṭa-bhāṭa*' occurs regularly in the Pāla inscriptions in the list of royal officials from the time of Devapāla down to the time of Madanapāla.[1] It is not impossible that some Karṇāṭa official gradually acquired sufficient power to set up as an independent king when the central authority became weak. As already noted above, the Kāmboja rule in Bengal in the tenth century A.D. may be explained in a similar way. The Abyssynian rule in Bengal in the fifteenth century A.D. is a well-known instance of the same type. This hypothesis is supported by the statement in the Naihati copper-plate that the Senas were settled in Rāḍhā for a long time before Sāmantasena.

The Senas might also have come in the wake of some foreign invasions, and established independent principalities in conquered territories in very much the same way as the Mahratta chiefs like Holkar and Sindhia did in Northern India during the eighteenth century A.D. As noted above,[2] the Karṇāṭa prince Vikramāditya led a victorious expedition against Bengal and Assam some time about 1068 A.D., and this was preceded and succeeded by others. Similar expeditions were sent to other parts of Northern India during his reign. 'A record of A.D. 1088-89 speaks of Vikramāditya VI crossing the Narmadā and conquering kings on the other side of the river.'[3] His feudatory chief Ācha is represented to have made "the kings of Kaliṅga, Vaṅga, Maru, Gūrjara, Māḷava, Chera, and Choḷa subject to his sovereign."[4] As this Ācha was the governor of a province in A.D. 1122-23,[5] his expedition against Vaṅga can hardly refer to that undertaken by his master in *c.* 1068 A.D., but probably took place much later, in the last decade of the eleventh or the first quarter of the twelfth century A.D. Inscriptions dated 1121 and 1124 A.D. also refer to the conquest of Aṅga, Vaṅga, Kaliṅga, Gauḍa, Magadha, and Nepāla by Vikramāditya.[6]

[1] The Khālimpur CP. of Dharmapāla does not contain any such phrase, but it occurs in the Nālandā CP. of the same king (*EI.* XXIII. 290). It is interesting to note, however, that Karṇāṭa is omitted from this list.

[2] *Supra* pp. 147, 164.

[3] *BG.* Vol. I, Part II. p. 452.

[4] *Ibid.* p. 219.

[5] *Ibid.* p. 452.

[6] Ins. of Devanagere Taluq, Nos. 2, 3. *Ep. Carn.* XI.

Reference may be made in this connection to the boast of Someśvara III (1127-38 A.D.) that he placed his feet on the heads of the kings of Andhra, Draviḍa, Magadha, and Nepāla.[1] Vijjala (*c* 1145-1167) also claims to have conquered Vaṅga, Kaliṅga, Magadha, and Nepāla.[2] Even his son Soma is said to have conquered Nepāla and Kaliṅga, and received homage of the Gauḍas.[3] From what we know of these rulers it is hardly likely that they could send directly any expedition to Vaṅga, Magadha or Nepāla. Probably they took the credit of what was done by Karṇāṭa chiefs who still paid a nominal homage to their distant overlord.

It is interesting to note that about the same time when the Senas were establishing their supremacy in Bengal, another Karṇāṭa chief Nānyadeva was doing the same in Bihar and Nepal. It is also probable that the Gāhaḍavālas, who founded about the same time a powerful kingdom with Kanauj as capital were of Karnatic origin.[4]

The fact seems to be that by storming the capital of the Paramāra king Bhoja I, and utterly destroying the Kalachuri king Karṇa, the Chālukya king Someśvara I paved the way for the Karṇāṭa domination in North Indian politics, and, as a result, powerful Karṇāṭa principalities were established in Northern India. It is most probable therefore that the Sena chief Sāmantasena or his successor, as well as Nānyadeva, came to establish powerful kingdoms in Northern India in the sweeping tide of the military successes of the Karṇāṭa kings of the Chālukya dynasty.

It has been suggested on the other hand that the Karṇāṭas in Bengal and Bihar were the remnants, either of Rājendra Choḷa's army[5] or of the Karṇāṭa allies of Karṇa,[6] the Kalachuri king. The first view is highly improbable as there is nothing to show that the Karṇāṭas formed part of Rājendra Choḷa's army. Even assuming that they did, it is very unlikely that the Karṇāṭa chiefs would be preferred to Choḷas in the selection of generals or governors who were left behind by the victorious Choḷa army to rule over conquered countries. As regards the latter view, Karṇa's alliance with the Karṇāṭas was of a temporary character.[7] Besides, the second part of the objection applies in his case also. On the whole, the most reasonable view seems to be to connect the rise of the Senas in Bengal and of Nānyadeva in Bihar with the Chālukya invasions of Northern India during the rule of Someśvara I and Vikramāditya VI, in the second-half of the eleventh century A.D., and the early years of the next century

[1] *JBoBrRAS.* XI. 268.
[2] Ablur Ins. l. 51 (*EI.* v. 257).
[3] Madagihal Ins. vv. 12-16 (*EI.* xv. 315).
[4] *IHQ.* VII. 681 ff.
[5] *PB.* 99.
[6] *JBORS.* IX. 306.
[7] Cf. *IHQ.* XII. 475-76.

II. The Sena Kings

The history of the Sena family begins with Sāmantasena. As noted above, he proved his valour in various wars in Karṇāṭa and settled in old age on the banks of the Ganges, evidently in some part of Rāḍhā, or the modern Burdwan Division. No royal title is given to him, and there is nothing to show that he founded a kingdom.

Hemantasena, the son of Sāmantasena, seems to have been a ruling chief. He lived in the last quarter of the eleventh century A.D., and the disruption of the Pāla kingdom after the revolt of Divvoka probably enabled him to carve out an independent principality in Rāḍhā. No record of Hemantasena has come to light, but he is given the title *Mahārājādhirāja* in the Barrackpur copper-plate[1] of his son Vijayasena, and reference is made to his great queen Yaśodevī in the Deopārā inscription[2] of the same monarch. But while these references indicate that he probably founded an independent principality, there is nothing to show that he was either very powerful or ruled over an extensive kingdom. His position was probably like that of the many other ruling chiefs of Rāḍhā who rallied round Rāmapāla in his expedition against Varendra.

Vijayasena

Hemantasena was succeeded by his son Vijayasena of whom we possess only two records mentioned above. He had probably a long reign of more than sixty years[3] (*c.* 1095-1158 A.D.), and he married Vilāsadevī, a princess of the Śūra family,[4] probably the one which was ruling in southern Rāḍhā at the time of the invasion of Rājendra Choḷa and also during the reign of Rāmapāla.[5] Vijayasena, too, must have begun his career as a petty chief. But he laid the foundation of the greatness of his family by conquering

[1] *IB*. 62. l. 23.
[2] v. 14. *IB*. 47.
[3] The date of the Barrackpur CP. (l. 49) was read by Mr. R. D. Banerji first as 37 (*PB*. 105), then as 31 (*BI*. 292) and finally as 32 (*EI*. xv. 284). Mr. D. C. Bhattacharya proposed the reading 61 (*IA*. LI. 157), on grounds which cannot be regarded as conclusive. Mr. N. G. Majumdar subsequently read the date as 62 (*IB*. 65) without giving any reason why he differed from Mr. Banerji. Although Mr. N. G. Majumdar's view is now generally accepted, and Vijayasena is credited with a long reign of at least 62 years, the matter cannot be regarded as finally settled. Cf. *JRASBL*. VII. 217; also App. I *infra*.
[4] Barrackpur CP. v. 7 (*IB*. 62). In Naihati CP. v. 10 (*IB*. 72-73), Vilāsadevī is called *Pradhānā-mahishī*.
[5] Raṇaśūra is mentioned as ruler of Dakshiṇa-Rāḍhā in the Ins. of Rājendra Choḷa (*supra* p. 138). Lakshmīśūra, the ruler of Apara-Mandāra, was one of the allied chiefs who joined Rāmapāla in his war against Bhīma (*supra* p. 157).

nearly the whole of Bengal. The circumstances which enabled him to defeat the other chiefs of Rāḍhā, and ultimately conquer East Bengal from the Varmans and at least a part of North Bengal from the Pālas, are not definitely known to us. But his success in Bengal, like that of the other Karṇāṭa chief Nānyadeva (*c.* 1097-*c.* 1147 A.D.)[1] in Bihar, may not unreasonably be connected with the Karṇāṭa domination in Northern India referred to above.[2]

Vijayasena was a contemporary of Nānyadeva, but does not appear to have scored any great success till the second quarter of the twelfth century A.D. Assuming that he had ascended the throne about A.D. 1095,[3] the part played by him in contemporary politics during the early years of his reign is extremely obscure. He was probably on the throne when Rāmapāla purchased the help of independent chiefs of Rāḍhā, in his campaign against Bhīma, by a lavish gift of money and territories. It has been suggested that Vijayarāja of Nidrāvalī, one of the allied feudatory chiefs mentioned in *Rāmacharita*, refers to Vijayasena. This is, however, not certain. It is probable that his marriage with a daughter of the Śūra royal family which ruled over Apara-Mandāra enabled him to attain political greatness. That he was helped by the invasion of the Karṇāṭas under Ācha in establishing his supremacy over Vaṅga may be guessed on general grounds, but cannot be established by any positive evidence. He might have entered into an alliance with Anantavarman Choḍagaṅga and profited by it in establishing his supremacy in Rāḍhā. Such an inference may be drawn from the expression '*Choḍagaṅga-sakhaḥ*,' 'friend of Choḍagaṅga,' used in respect of him in Ānandabhaṭṭa's *Vallāla-charita* (Life of his son Vallālasena), but the genuineness of the book has been doubted on good grounds.[4] All that we can, therefore, say is that he fished in the troubled waters of Bengal politics and came out successful.

That he had to fight with several independent chiefs is expressly referred to in the Deopārā inscription. Among them specific mention is made of his victory over Nānya, Vīra, Rāghava, Vardhana, and the kings of Gauḍa, Kāmarūpa, and Kaliṅga. Of these Vardhana may be identified with Dvorapavardhana, ruler of Kauśāmbī, and Vīra with Vīraguṇa of Koṭāṭavī, two of the allied chiefs who had joined Rāmapāla. Rāghava and the king of Kaliṅga, mentioned in different verses, probably refer to the same person. In that case, we can identify him with the second son of Anantavarman Choḍa-

[1] *IHQ*. VII. 679 ff. [2] *Supra* pp. 208-9.
[3] This is based on the view that he ruled for 62 years.
[4] Cf. App. II *infra*.

gaṅga who ruled from 1156 to 1170 A.D.[1] This expedition must then have been undertaken towards the close of his reign.

The most notable of his adversaries were Nānya and the lord of Gauḍa. Nānya is undoubtedly the Karṇāṭa chief who had conquered Mithilā about 1097 A.D. It is mentioned in the colophon of a commentary on Bharata's *Nāṭyasūtra*, composed by Nānya,[2] that he had broken the powers of Vaṅga and Gauḍa. It is reasonable to hold therefore that Nānyadeva, after he had consolidated his dominion in North Bihar turned his attention towards Bengal, which was then in a process of political disintegration. He might have obtained some successes at first both against the Pāla king of Gauḍa and the Sena king Vijayasena of Vaṅga, but was ultimately defeated by the latter and fell on his own dominions in Mithilā. It is, of course, an equally plausible assumption that the two Karṇāṭa chiefs Vijayasena and Nānya at first combined their forces to break the powers of Vaṅga and Gauḍa, but ultimately fell out and fought over the prize which went to the victor Vijayasena. The way in which the memory of the Sena kings has been kept up in Mithilā and the traditions current at a later date[3] make it highly probable that Vijayasena pursued an aggressive campaign against Nānya in the latter's dominions and brought Mithilā under his own rule.

The lord of Gauḍa who, according to Deopārā inscription, fled before Vijayasena, was almost certainly Madanapāla whose dominions in Bengal were at that time confined to North Bengal. That inscription records the erection by Vijayasena of the magnificent temple of Pradyumneśvara whose ruins now lie on the bank of an enormous tank, known as Padumshahr, at Deopārā, about seven miles to the

[1] For the identifications proposed cf. *IB.* 45.

[2] For a detailed account cf. *IHQ.* VII. 679 ff. Dr. K. C. Pandey has pointed out that as Abhinavagupta refers to Nānyadeva and quotes a passage from his commentary, this Nānyadeva must have flourished before 1014-15 A.D., the date of one of Abhinavagupta's works [*Abhinavagupta—An Historical and Philosophical Study* (Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series), pp. 121-23]. This point undoubtedly requires further investigation, but as no other Nānya, king of Mithilā, and belonging to the Karṇāṭa family, is known to us, we have accepted the identity of the two and fixed his date on the basis of more reliable data.

[3] *La Saṁ* or Lakshmaṇasena Era has been current in Mithilā. According to *Laghubhārata* (Part II, p. 140. *JASB.* LXV. 26), Vallālasena undertook a military expedition to Mithilā. As he is said to have heard on the way the news of the birth of his son Lakshmaṇasena, the expedition evidently took place during the reign of Vijayasena. The Mithilā expedition is also referred to in *Vallāla-charita* (Ch. XXVII. vv. 5-8) in which it is distinctly said that Vallāla accompanied his father and obtained victory. According to traditions current in Bengal, Mithilā was one of the five provinces of the kingdom of Vallālasena (*Vallāla-charita,* I. 8).

west of the town of Rajshahi. This proves the effective conquest, by Vijayasena, of at least a part of North Bengal. It was perhaps in connection with this expedition to North Bengal that Vijayasena came into conflict with Vardhana, king of Kauśāmbī, and defeated him. It is very probable that Vijayasena's young grandson, Lakshmaṇasena, took part in this expedition to North Bengal.[1]

In spite of his eminent success, it does not appear that the final conquest of Gauḍa was achieved by Vijayasena. His son and grandson had to continue the struggle, and the latter was perhaps the first to assume formally the proud title of *Gauḍeśvara*. For although this title is applied to both Vijayasena and Vallālasena in the records of the latter's grandsons, and to Vallālasena in the existing manuscripts of his literary works, it is not associated with these two kings in their own official records or those of Lakshmaṇasena. The title is not also applied to Lakshmaṇasena in his earlier records, and appears for the first time in the Bhowal and Mādhāinagar Grants which belong to the latter part of his reign. It is, therefore, very likely that the long-drawn struggle with the Pāla kings was not finally concluded, and their pretensions to the sovereignty of Gauḍa definitely abandoned, till the reign of Lakshmaṇasena. But this does not necessarily mean that Vijayasena or Vallālasena had not virtually conquered the greater part, if not the whole of Gauḍa, for, as the example of Govindapāla shows, the last Pāla kings, who called themselves *Gauḍeśvaras*, could carry on the fight from their base in Southern Bihar.

The original seat of the Sena power, and the base from which they proceeded to the conquest of the whole province, was Rāḍhā, but soon they consolidated their power in Vaṅga. Their early land-grants are all issued from Vikramapura, the capital city of Vaṅga, and it was there that the queen of Vijayasena performed the elaborate sacrifice known as *Tulāpurusha Mahādāna*. This shows that the Varmans who ruled in Vaṅga with Vikramapura as capital must have ceased to reign in that region. Whether the Varmans were ousted by Vijayasena, or lost their kingdom before, there is no means to determine, but the former view appears more probable.

The statement in the Deopārā inscription that Vijayasena drove away the king of Kāmarūpa does not necessarily mean that he invaded the province, although that is not improbable. The king

[1] It is said in the Mādhāinagar and Bhowal CP. that Lakshmaṇasena suddenly seized the goddess of fortune of the king of Gauḍa, while he was a Kumāra, and sported with the women of Kaliṅga while he was young. It would thus appear that Lakshmaṇasena undertook an expedition against Gauḍa even before he attained his full youth.

of Assam, perhaps Vaidyadeva[1] (who was appointed as such by Kumārapāla) or his successor, might have invaded the newly founded dominions of the Senas and was driven away. According to the Mādhāinagar Grant, this kingdom was subdued by strength by Lakshmaṇasena. Here, again, it may be a reference to the expedition undertaken by him during the reign of Vijayasena or a subsequent and separate one. In the latter case, Vijayasena's defeat of the king of Kāmarūpa was neither final nor decisive.

Similar uncertainty hangs over another episode of the reign of Vijayasena *viz.*, the conquest of Kaliṅga and the victory over its king Rāghava. For Lakshmaṇasena is said to have planted pillars of victory in Purī.[2] If he had done so during the reign of his grandfather,[3] the claims of Vijayasena that he conquered Kaliṅga and defeated its king cannot be regarded as an empty boast. It was Bengal's retaliation for Anantavarman Choḍagaṅga's conquests in Southern Rāḍhā. But if Lakshmaṇasena's Kaliṅga expedition is to be regarded as a separate event, we cannot define the nature and extent of Vijayasena's success in this southern expedition. The defeat of Vīra of Koṭāṭavī, assuming that the kingdom formed a part of Orissa, may be an episode in the great Kaliṅga expedition of Vijayasena.

While the Deopārā inscription mentions the victorious expeditions of Vijayasena to the north (Gauḍa and Mithilā), east (Kāmarūpa), and south (Kaliṅga), it contains merely a vague allusion to his victory in the west. We are told in verse 22, that 'his fleet in its play of conquest of the dominions in the west advanced along the course of the Ganges.'[4] The course of the Ganges flows north to south from a point to the north of Rājmahal, and east to west beyond that, and we may infer from the above passage that Vijayasena's victorious fleet sailed westwards beyond Rājmahal. But we are not told anything about the object of the naval expedition and the extent of its success. The inscription is silent on both these points. The naval expedition, probably as an auxiliary to a land force, must have been despatched against a ruling power in Bihar, though it is uncertain whether the enemy was Nānyadeva, the Gāhaḍavāla king Govindachandra, or the Pāla king (Madanapāla or Govindapāla) still ruling in a part of Southern Bihar.[5] The

[1] It has been suggested (*DHNI.* I. 259-60) that the adversary was Rāyārideva who is mentioned in Tezpur Plate as having defeated the force of a king of Vaṅga (*EI* v. 186). But most probably Rāyārideva fought as a feudatory of the king of Kāmarūpa (*HK.* 197).

[2] Edilpur cp. v. 13. (*IB.* 122, 128).

[3] This appears very probable from the statement referred to *supra* p. 213, f.n. 1.

[4] *IB.* 54.

[5] *Supra* p. 170.

fact that even Umāpatidhara, the author of the inscription, who is noted for his fulsome praise of everything connected with Vijayasena, has not a word to say about the victorious achievements of Vijayasena's fleet in the west, would naturally lead to the inference that the western expedition was not crowned with any conspicuous success.

The long and prosperous reign of Vijayasena was a momentous episode in the history of Bengal. The Pāla rule came to an end after four centuries of eventful history, and the troubles and miseries caused by internal disruption and foreign invasions towards the close of this period were terminated by the establishment of a strong monarchy. The achievements of Vijayasena in this respect are comparable to those of Gopāla, though there is one significant difference. For while the Pāla dynasty was founded on the sacrifices of the chiefs and the common consent of the people, the Senas imposed their rule by ruthless wars and conquests. This does not necessarily cast a slur on Vijayasena's career, or take away from the credit that is justly due to him. For the times were changed and perhaps nothing but a policy of blood and iron could keep up the political fabric which was crumbling to dust. The self-seeking chiefs of Bengal had lost all political wisdom, and, guided by motives of petty self-interest, lost the noble ideal of a strong united motherland which had inspired their ancestors four hundred years ago. The policy, imposed by necessity on Rāmapāla, of securing their alliance by lavish gifts merely increased their self-importance and whetted their appetite. They required a strong master to keep them down, and fortunately for Bengal a sturdy Karṇāṭa chief proved equal to the task. Vijayasena, possessed of uncommon courage and military genius, put down these petty chiefs and was fully justified in assuming the imperial titles *Parameśvara, Paramabhaṭṭāraka, Mahārājādhirāja* and the proud epithet '*Arirāja-vṛishabha-śaṅkara.*'

The long and memorable reign of Vijayasena which restored peace and prosperity in Bengal made a deep impression upon its people. This feeling is echoed in the remarkable poetic composition of Umāpatidhara preserved on a slab of stone found at Deopārā.[1] In spite of its rhetoric excesses, it is a fine poetic expression of high tribute willingly paid to a remarkable career. It has also been suggested on good grounds that the *Gauḍ-orvīśa-kula-praśasti* (eulogy of the royal family of Gauḍa) and the *Vijaya-praśasti* (eulogy of Vijaya) of the famous poet Śrī-Harsha were inspired by the career of Vijayasena.[2]

[1] *IB.* 42 ff.

[2] Cf. *IC.* II. 578. Bhandarkar identifies Vijaya of the Praśasti with Vijayachandra, father of Jayachandra of Kanauj (*IA.* 1913, p. 84). But the 'Gauḍa

Vallālasena

Vijayasena died about 1158 A.D. and was succeeded by his son Vallālasena. We possess only a single inscription of his reign.[1] It does not contain any record of victory and only bestows vague praises upon him for his valour. But there are good grounds for the belief that Vallālasena had some positive military successes to his credit. It has been pointed out above that Govindapāla, the last Pāla ruler of Magadha, lost his kingdom in 1162 A.D. As this date falls in the reign of Vallālasena, the final defeat of the Pālas in Magadha may be ascribed to him. The reference in *Adbhuta-sāgara* that the arms of Vallālasena were pillars for chaining the elephant, *viz.*, the lord of Gauḍa,[2] refers to his successful conflict with the Gauḍa king, and this may be no other than Govindapāla himself, who assumed the title of *Gauḍeśvara*, though his records are found only in Magadha.

There is no reliable evidence that Vallālasena ever led a campaign against Magadha, but there are old traditions to this effect preserved in *Vallāla-charita*.[3] This work also refers to his expedition against Mithilā during the reign of his father. It is difficult to say how far these traditions correspond to real facts. But the Sena rule over Mithilā during the reigns of Vallālasena and his successor is indirectly supported, among other things,[4] by the obscurity in the history of Mithilā after Nānyadeva[5] and the tenacity with which Mithilā of all provinces used an era associated with the name of Lakshmaṇasena.

The epigraphic evidence and tradition, however, leave the impression that Vallālasena's reign was chiefly marked by peaceful pursuits. Traditions in Bengal associate his name with important social reforms and revival of orthodox Hindu rites to which detailed references will be made in subsequent chapters. He was also a great scholar and an author of repute, and two of his works *Dānasāgara* and *Adbhutasāgara* have come down to us.[6] He married Rāmadevī, the daughter of a Chālukya king,[7] most probably Jagadekamalla II. This fact is interesting in more ways than one. It proves the growing strength and prestige of the Senas as a political power, and also shows that they had still kept contact with their ancestral land Karṇāṭa. In imitation of his father, Vallālasena assumed the

royal family' almost certainly refers to the Senas, and Śrī-Harsha was a contemporary of Vijayasena.

1 Naihati CP. (*IB.* 68).

2 *IB.* 174:

3 Cf. Appendix II *infra.*

4 Cf. *supra* p. 212.

5 After Nānyadeva, the next king of the Karṇāṭa-*kula*, authentically recorded, is Harasiṁhadeva ruling in 1314 A.D. (*JASB.* N.S. XI. 410-11; cf. *DHNI.* I. 205-6).

6 For a fuller account cf. Ch. XI *infra.*

7 Mādhāinagar CP. v. 9 (*IB.* 110).

epithet *Arirāja-niḥśaṅka-śaṅkara* along with the other imperial titles. Whether Vallālasena carried on any aggressive military campaign or not, there is hardly any doubt that he maintained intact the dominions inherited from his father. This roughly comprised the whole of the present Bengal Presidency, probably with North Bihar. According to traditions current in Bengal, the dominions of Vallālasena comprised five provinces, *viz.*, Vaṅga, Varendra, Rāḍhā, Bāgḍī and Mithilā.[1] The first three comprise Bengal proper, while the last corresponds to North Bihar. As regards Bāgḍī, it is generally identified with a portion of the modern Presidency Division in Bengal[2] including the Sundarbans, but no satisfactory evidence has been produced in support of it. It is probably to be identified with the *Mahāl* Bāgḍī in north Midnapur[3] mentioned in *Ain-i-Akbari,* and also shown in Rennell's Atlas,[4] and was the borderland between Rāḍhā and Utkala. As it lay outside the well-known divisions of Bengal, *viz.*, Rāḍhā, Varendra and Vaṅga, a new name was probably given to it.

There is no direct epigraphic evidence in support of the boundaries of the Sena kingdom depicted above. But the campaigns against Kaliṅga and Kāmarūpa attributed to both Vijayasena and Lakshmaṇasena, the successful wars of the former against Nānya of Mithilā, and the advance of the latter up to Benares and Allahabad indirectly support the limits of the kingdom of Vallālasena described above.

A passage[5] in *Adbhutasāgara* contains a reference to the end of the life or reign of Vallālasena, but unfortunately its interpretation is not free from difficulty. It says that Vallālasena commenced the composition of *Adbhutasāgara* in Śaka 1090 (or 1089) ; but before

[1] *Cf. e.g. Vallāla-charita*, Ch. I. v. 8. The authenticity of this work is questionable, and it is difficult to say whether the tradition is old and genuine (See App. II. *infra*).

[2] The identification proposed by Cunningham (*ASC.* XV. 145-46) is now generally accepted. Dr. S. N. Majumdar derived the name from Vyāghrataṭī (Cunningham's *Geography*, ed. by S. N. Majumdar, p. 731), referred to as a *maṇḍala* in the Puṇḍravardhana-*bhukti* in the Khalimpur CP. of Dharmapāla (*Pāla Ins.* No. 2) and also mentioned in the Nālandā CP. of Devapāla (*Pāla Ins.* No. 7) and the Ānuliā CP. of Lakshmaṇasena (*IB.* 87). The derivation, though probable, is not certain. But Southern Bengal, where Bāgḍī or Vyāghrataṭī is located, was included in Vaṅga or Vaṅgāla.

[3] For a detailed account of Bāgḍī-mahāl and its later history cf. *JASB.* N.S. XII. 49.

[4] In Rennell's Atlas, Plate No. VII, "Bagree" is shown as a large tract of country in Vishṇupur and Midnapur, between the Rupnarayan and Cossai rivers.

[5] The verses in Bombay MSS. (*GR.* 63) are somewhat different from those in Muralidhar Jha's edition (*IB.* 174). The general sense, however, is clear.

it was completed he, accompanied by his queen, went to '*Nirjarapura*' at the confluence of the Ganges and the Yamunā, leaving to his son Lakshmaṇasena the great tasks of maintaining his empire and completing his literary work. Now, *Nirjarapura* means the city of Gods *i.e. heaven,* but may also be the name of a locality. If we take the first meaning, we must conclude that the old king and queen voluntarily ended their lives at Triveṇī by drowning themselves in the holy water of the Ganges, as Rāmapāla did a little more than half a century before. If we take the latter meaning, we must conclude that the aged king left the cares of government to his son, and with his queen spent his last days in retirement on the bank of the Ganges at a locality near Triveṇī. Whether he formally abdicated the throne and performed the coronation ceremony of his son, as has been suggested by some,[1] is difficult to decide, though the expression '*sāmrājya-rakshā-mahā-dīkshā-parva*' lends colour to this view. There is, however, no warrant for the assumption that the abdication took place in Śaka 1090.[2] The mere fact that a book, begun in that year, was left unfinished when Vallālasena died or abdicated, does not prove that such an incident took place immediately, or even shortly after that date, for a royal author might take many years to finish an abstruse astronomical work. Vallālasena was certainly ruling in 1091 Śaka when he composed *Dānasāgara,* and the assumption that he died or ceased to rule in 1179 A.D., is not incompatible with the fact that he could not complete *Adbhutasāgara* in his life-time.

Lakshmaṇasena

Lakshmaṇasena, son of Vallālasena and Rāmadevī, succeeded his father about 1179 A.D. He must have been fairly old at this time, being about sixty according to *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī* (See App. III). Eight of his records have come down to us.[3] He assumed the epithet *Arirāja-madana-śaṅkara,* and added *Gauḍeśvara* to the imperial titles. There was another significant change. For whereas the title

[1] *IC.* IV. 231. [2] *JRAS.* 1930, pp. 5-9.

[3]
I. Year 2.—Govindapur CP. .. (*IB.* 92).
II. Year 2.—Tarpanadighi CP. .. (*IB.* 99).
III. Year 2 (or 3).—Bakultalā (Sundarban) CP. (*IB.* 169).
IV. Year 3.—Ānuliā CP. .. .. (*IB.* 81).
V. Year 3.—Dacca Image Ins. .. (*IB.* 116).
VI. Year 6.—Śaktipur CP. .. .. (*EI.* XXI. 211).
[The date has been read as 3 by R. Basu, *SPP.* XXXVII. 216].
VII. Year 27.—Bhowal CP. .. .. (*EI.* XXVI. 1 ff).
VIII. Mādhāinagar CP. .. .. (*IB.* 106).

Parama-Māheśvara is applied to both Vijayasena and Vallālasena in their own official records, the word '*Parama-Vaishṇava*' or '*Parama-Nārasiṁha*' is substituted for it in the official records of Lakshmaṇasena. What is stranger still, the title *Parama-Vaishṇava* is also applied to Vallālasena in the records of his son (Nos. I and VII). This incidentally proves how titles assumed by later kings are occasionally applied to their predecessors, though the latter probably never used them themselves. The title *Gauḍeśvara* applied to Vijayasena and Vallālasena in the records of Keśavasena and Viśvarūpasena is perhaps another instance in point.

The sudden change in the imperial title and the commencement of official records by an invocation to Nārāyaṇa, instead of to Śiva as before, show that Lakshmaṇasena became a devout Vaishṇava although his predecessors were Śaivas.[1] This is supported by the fact that Jayadeva, the most famous Vaishṇava poet of Bengal, lived in his court. Lakshmaṇasena's court was also graced by other eminent poets such as Dhoyī, Śaraṇa, and probably also Govardhana. The great scholar Halāyudha who served as Chief Minister and Chief Judge was another distinguished member of the entourage of the king. The king himself and other members of the royal family were literary men, and some of their verses are still preserved in the anthology of Sanskrit verses, called *Sadukti-karṇāmṛita*, compiled by Śrīdharadāsa. As noted above, Lakshmaṇasena also completed the astronomical work *Adbhutasāgara* begun by his father.

But Lakshmaṇasena was no less distinguished in military than in peaceful pursuits. His own copper-plates (Nos. VII-VIII) and those of his sons[2] refer to his victories over the neighbouring kings in all directions. He may also be regarded as the unnamed hero whose great military triumphs are praised in isolated verses composed by his court-poets Śaraṇa and Umāpatidhara.[3]

[1] It is to be noted, however, that the representation of Sadāśiva on the royal seal was continued.

[2] *IB.* 122-23. 135. 144.

[3] Two stanzas of Umāpatidhara refer to the victories against Prāgjyotisha (*i.e.* Kāmarūpa or Assam) and Kāśī (*JASB.* N.S. II. 161). A verse of Śaraṇa also mentions the conquest of Gauḍa, Kaliṅga, Kāmarūpa, Kāśī and Magadha, and victory against the Chedi king and a Mlechchha ruler (*JASB.* N.S. II. 174). The name of the victorious king is not mentioned in any of these poems, but as the authors lived in the court of Lakshmaṇasena, and the conquest of Kāmarūpa, Kāśī, Kaliṅga and Gauḍa are ascribed to that king in the inscriptions, he may be regarded as the hero lauded by the poets. In that case the defeat of the Mlechchha king most probably refers to a conflict with the Muslim invaders. Mr. J. M. Roy, however, records a tradition that the Mags of Arakan claimed suzerainty over Bengal during the reign of Galaya (1133-1153 A.D.) and is of opinion that there was probably a conflict between Lakshmaṇasena and the Mags (*Ḍhākār Itihāsa*, II. 366).

Particular references are made in his own records to his victories over the kings of Gauḍa, Kāmarūpa, Kaliṅga, and Kāśī. His success against the last two is emphasised in the records of his sons. For we are told that he planted pillars commemorating military victory at Puri, Benares and Allahabad.

As already noted above, Lakshmaṇasena's campaign against Gauḍa, Kāmarūpa, and Kaliṅga might refer to expeditions which he led or accompanied during the reign of his grandfather. Otherwise we have to assume that these provinces, although conquered by Vijayasena, were not fully subdued or had rebelled, and Lakshmaṇasena had to conquer them afresh. At all events we may regard the Sena suzerainty as well established over these three regions in the North, East and South.

It was in the fourth region, on the west, that Lakshmaṇasena achieved conspicuous success during his reign. From what has been said above in connection with the reign of Madanapāla, it may be assumed that at the time the Senas consolidated their power in Bengal, the Pālas were ruling in Central and Eastern Magadha, while the northern part of that kingdom had passed into the hands of the Gāhaḍavālas. Vijayasena's efforts to extend the Sena power to Magadha were not attended with much success. The extent of Vallālasena's success in this direction cannot be exactly determined, though, as noted above, he might have given the death-blow to the Pāla power by defeating Govindapāla. But the success of Vallālasena was short-lived and probably indirectly helped the Gāhaḍavālas by destroying the Pāla power in Bihar. For it appears that after Govindapāla nearly the whole of Magadha passed into the hands of the Gāhaḍavālas. An inscription found in the neighbourhood of Sasaram[1] shows that the region was included in 1169 A.D. in the dominions of king Vijayachandra. The Sihvar Plate,[2] dated 1175 A.D., refers to a grant of king Jayachandra, probably in the Patna district, while another record of the same king, found at Bodh-Gayā, incised some time between 1183 and 1192 A.D.,[3] shows the extension of the Gāhaḍavāla power in Central Magadha.

The progress of the Gāhaḍavāla power in Magadha was a direct menace to the Senas. So the struggle begun in the time of Vijayasena must have been continued by his successors. Although the

[1] *Tārāchaṇḍī Rock Ins.* (*JAOS.* VI. 547-49). Substance given in *DHNI.* I. 534. For the date cf. *EI.* V. App. No. 153, p. 22; Bhandarkar's *List*, No. 340.

[2] *IA.* XVIII. 129; *DHNI.* I. 537-38.

[3] *IHQ.* V. 14. The date of this grant is expressed in words as V.S. 124x, the word for the unit figure being lost. It might then be any year between 1240 and 1249 V.S. (1183-1192 A.D.).

details of this struggle are lacking, and the part played by Vallālasena is not definitely known, there is hardly any doubt that Lakshmaṇasena succeeded in driving away the Gāhaḍavālas from Magadha, and even carried his victorious arms right into the heart of the Gāhaḍavāla dominions.

The king of Kāśī mentioned in Lakshmaṇasena's records undoubtedly refers to the Gāhaḍavāla king, and by defeating him Lakshmaṇa ousted him from Magadha. The Sena conquest of the Gayā district is indubitably proved by the two records of Aśokachalla found in Gayā. These are dated in the years 51 and 74 of the *'atīta-rājya'* of Lakshmaṇasena. Although the correct interpretation of the dates is open to doubt, there is a general consensus of opinion that the expression used in these two records undoubtedly proves that Gayā was included within the dominions of Lakshmaṇasena.[1] It may be mentioned here, that the laudatory verse of Umāpatidhara, referred to above, includes Magadha among the conquests of his hero, who is probably no other than Lakshmaṇasena.

The conquest of the Gayā region, if not the whole of Magadha, was evidently only the first stage in the successful campaign of Lakshmaṇasena against Kāśirāja, *i.e.* the Gāhaḍavāla king Jayachandra. The planting of the pillars of victory in Benares and Allahabad, referred to in the records of Lakshmaṇasena's sons, represents the succeeding stages in the same campaign, which led him into the heart of his adversary's dominions.

The permanent result of this campaign of Lakshmaṇasena against the Gāhaḍavāla king cannot be determined. According to the interpretation of Aśokachalla's records suggested later, the Gayā district remained in possession of Lakshmaṇasena till it was conquered by the Muslims.[2] His advance up to Benares and Allahabad was probably more in the nature of a daring raid than a regular conquest. But it might have resulted in weakening the power and prestige of the Gāhaḍavāla ruler, and keeping him busy at a time when he required peace and his full strength to join the confederacy against the Muslim invaders.

The victories mentioned by Umāpatidhara include one against the Chedi king. Now Vallabharāja, a feudatory of the Kalachuri kings of Ratanpur, claims to have reduced the king of Gauḍa.[3] As Vallabharāja flourished in the middle of the twelfth century A.D.,

[1] For a full discussion on this point cf. *JASB*. N.S. XVII. 8 ff. and also Appendix I *infra*.

[2] *JASB*. N.S. XVII. 14.

[3] Kotgarh, now Akaltara Ins. (Cf. Hiralal, *Descriptive List of Inscriptions in Central Provinces and Berar*, pp. 109-110).

it is probable that Umāpatidhara also refers to the same contest. In any case, Vallabharāja's reference to a fight with Gauḍa gives an historical character to Umāpati's statement which might otherwise have been regarded as purely imaginary. The genesis of the hostility between Gauḍa and the Kalachuri kingdom and the scene of conflict are alike unknown to us. Further, since both the parties claim victory, the result of the struggle must be regarded as indecisive.

It would thus appear that Lakshmaṇasena carried on military expeditions far away from the frontiers of Bengal in all directions. Since the days of Dharmapāla and Devapāla no other ruler in Bengal had carried on such wide and extensive military campaigns, and so far as we can judge from extant evidence, his efforts were crowned with a fair degree of success. Under him Bengal played an important part in North Indian politics, and nearly six hundred years were to elapse before she was destined again to play a similar rôle under a strange combination of circumstances.

But although Lakshmaṇasena began with a brilliant career of conquest, his reign ended in a sea of troubles that overwhelmed him and his kingdom. Unfortunately sufficient details are not known to enable us to explain the sudden collapse of his power or give an intelligent account of it. An inscription, found in Western Sundarbans, shows that one Ḍommaṇapāla had set up as an independent chief in the eastern part of Khāḍī (in Sundarbans) in 1196 A.D.[1]

[1] *IHQ*. x. 321 ff. The name of the chief is given as Śrī-Maḍommaṇapāla I suggested in a letter to one of the editors that the name should be read as Śrīma(d)-Ḍommaṇapāla. The same suggestion has been made by Dr. D. C. Sircar (*IC*. I. 679). Dr. Sircar seems to imply (*Ibid*. p. 680, f.n. 2) that Ḍommaṇapāla was a feudal chief of Lakshmaṇasena, but the whole tenor of the inscription leaves no doubt that Ḍommaṇapāla was for all practical purposes an independent chief. I agree with Dr. Sircar that the word *Mahārājādhirāja* in l. 2 is an epithet of Ḍommaṇapāla, and should not be construed, as the editors have done, with *vipaksha* to indicate that Ḍommaṇapāla was hostile to the *Mahārājādhirāja i.e.* his suzerain ruler. Such an interpretation would be most curious, to say the least of it.

The inscription tells us that the Pāla family to which Ḍommaṇapāla belonged migrated from Ayodhyā and acquired the possession (*upārjjita*) of Pūrva-khāṭikā, whether by conquest or other means, it is not clear. It refers to only two rulers. The proper name of the first ruler cannot be read in full. It begins with *Śrī* and ends in *-pāladeva*, with about three letters missing or indistinct after *Śrī*. The first of these letters has been read as *Śri*, but looks more like *Gṛi*. The next letter has been peeled off, and the following one is almost certainly *la*. This person is styled *Parama-Māheśvara, Mahāmāṇḍalika*. He was succeeded by Ḍommaṇapāla, who is called *Mahāsāmantādhipati, Mahārājādhirāja*, and something else which is not clearly intelligible.

Whether the family was connected in any way with the Pāla rulers of Bengal it is impossible to say. It is very likely that Ḍommaṇapāla, son of a provincial

Khāḍī district is mentioned as an integral part of the Sena dominions in the records of both Vijayasena and Lakshmaṇasena, and the revolution of Ḍommaṇapāla is an important indication of the weakness of the authority of Lakshmaṇasena and the disruption of his kingdom in his old age. Perhaps the Deva family also set up an independent kingdom to the east of the Meghnā river about the same time.[1] During this period of turmoil, some time about 1202 A.D., when Lakshmaṇasena was probably very old, Bengal was invaded by the Muslims who had by that time conquered nearly the whole of Northern India. The detailed account of this invasion, led by Muhammad Bakhtyār Khilji, is given in *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī*. The date and nature of this raid and the reliability of the account in the *Tabaqāt* are subjects of keen controversy, and the whole question has been dealt with in detail in Appendix III to this chapter. It will suffice here to give a short account of the episode as described in *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī*.

Muhammad Bakhtyār Khilji, a Turkish soldier of fortune, took advantage of the general collapse of Hindu kingdoms of Northern India to make plundering raids in Eastern India on his own account. In course of one of these he seized the great Buddhist monastery at Bihar (Patna district), and later he reduced the whole of Magadha. We do not know what arrangement Lakshmaṇasena had made to protect Magadha which belonged to him, or to defend Bengal which was obviously open to a similar attack and justly apprehended to be the next objective of Muhammad. It is probable that forces were posted on the military route that led from Bihar to Bengal along the Ganges, through the passes of the Rājmahal Hills. Muhammad Bakhtyār, however, led a cavalry force through unfrequented hills and jungles of Jharkhand, and by forced marches suddenly appeared before Nadiyā where Lakshmaṇasena was staying at the time. So swift were his movements that when he reached the city-gate, he was accompanied by only eighteen of his followers. They were regarded as horse-dealers, and Muhammad kept up the pretension by moving slowly through the city. By the time he reached the gate of the palace, more of his soldiers had entered the city, and then a simultaneous attack was made on the palace and the city. Lakshmaṇasena was taking his midday meal when a loud cry arose from the gate of the palace and the interior of the

Governor or feudal chief under the Senas, assumed independence and founded a principality in eastern Khāḍī which is now represented by the Sundarbans where the plate was found. The subsequent history of the family is unknown.

[1] For an account of the Deva family, cf. Ch. IX. § 1 *infra*.

city When he realised the critical situation, he left the palace and retired to Eastern Bengal. Muhammad Bakhtyār met with no opposition, and as soon as his whole army arrived he took possession of the city and fixed up his quarters there. Later, he left Nadiyā in desolation and removed his capital to Lakhnawati. No mention is made of any further struggle with the Senas, nor is there any definite statement about the region that formed the dominions of Muhammad Bakhtyār. The disastrous Tibetan expedition of Muhammad, followed shortly by his death, must have considerably weakened the hold of Muslim rule in Bengal. In any case it does not appear to have taken root anywhere outside North Bengal. The coins issued by Mughisuddin Yuzbek in 653 A.H. (1255 A.D.) shows that probably even Nadiyā could not be effectively conquered by the Muslims during half a century that followed the first raid.

Lakshmaṇasena certainly continued to rule in Eastern Bengal, at least for three or four years after the raid on Nadiyā. Although to-day we rightly regard this incident as an epoch-making event marking the end of independent Hindu rule in Bengal, it does not appear to have been taken in that light by the contemporaries. One, if not two, of the land-grants of Lakshmaṇasena was issued some years after the conquests of Muhammad Bakhtyār. It gives the usual high-sounding royal titles to Lakshmaṇasena and eulogises his great military achievements. The laudatory verse of Umāpatidhara even refers to Lakshmaṇasena's victory against a Mlechchha king, who may be regarded as a Muslim ruler in Bengal. The sons of Lakshmaṇasena also claim victory over the Yavanas, and their records are drawn up in the right old style with all the high-sounding royal titles. It is difficult to say whether all these are to be explained by the false court etiquette that clings to a royal dynasty even after its downfall, or should be taken to indicate that the Muslim chroniclers have given an exaggerated account of the extent and importance of Muhammad's conquests in Bengal.

Whatever view we might take of the nature and consequences of the Muslim raid on Nadiyā and Lakshmaṇasena's responsibility for the same, his name should go down in history as that of a great and noble, though unfortunate, ruler. In spite of popular views to the contrary, based on a superficial knowledge of the account in *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī*, he must be regarded as the last great Hindu hero in Bengal of whom his country might well feel proud. Even a perusal of *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī* leaves the impression that the aged king showed far greater courage and patriotism than his counsellors and chieftains. It is not perhaps without significance that while the author of *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī* passed over in silence even such a famous king as Pṛithvīrāja, he went out of his way to bestow

very high praises upon Lakshmaṇasena, 'the great Rāe of Bengal, and even compared him with Sultan Qutbuddin. There must also be some good reason why the people of Gayā region clung fondly to his name for nearly a century after his death, and his memory was perpetuated in Mithilā (North Bihar) by the naming of an era after him.

III. THE SUCCESSORS OF LAKSHMAṆASENA

Lakshmaṇasena ruled for at least 27 years and died some time after 1205 A.D.[1] His two sons Viśvarūpasena and Keśavasena ruled in succession[2] after him. The latter is known from a single record[3] dated in his third regnal year, while we possess two records of the former, one dated in the 14th regnal year,[4] and the other somewhat later.[5] Probably Viśvarūpasena was the elder of the two brothers and succeeded his father.[6] Although no details of their reigns are known to us, it is clear from their records that they ruled at least over Eastern and Southern Bengal. For the first two inscriptions referred to above record grants of land in Vikramapura, and the third in marshy lands of Southern Bengal on the sea-coast.[7]

Both the kings are given the usual imperial titles while, in addition, Viśvarūpasena is called '*Arirāja-vṛishabhāṅka-śaṅkara-Gauḍeśvara,*' and Keśavasena, '*Arirāja-asahya-śaṅkara-Gauḍeśvara.*' The epithet '*Saura*' applied to these kings seems to indicate that they were sun-worshippers. Thus the Sena royal family transferred their allegiance in turn to the three important religious sects, Śaiva, Vaishṇava and Saura.

The records describe the military prowess of both the kings in vague general terms, but offer no details except a reference to their

[1] According to *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī*, Lakshmaṇasena died shortly after the raid on Nadiyā (p. 558). But the colophon of *Saduktí-karṇāmṛita* refers to Lakshmaṇasena as the ruling king in A.D. 1205 (*IHQ*. III. 188).

[2] As both of them granted lands in Vikramapura they evidently ruled in the same region, one after the other.

[3] Edilpur CP. (*IB*. 118 ff). [4] Madanapāḍā CP. (*IB*. 132 ff).

[5] Madhyapāḍā (Calcutta Sāhitya Parishat) CP. (*IB*. 140 ff). This is not dated but in l. 58 it refers to a grant made in year 14. So it must have been engraved in year 14 or later.

[6] Mr. R. D. Banerji came to this conclusion on the ground that the grant of Keśavasena contained all the verses found in the Madanapāḍā Grant of Viśvarūpasena and some additional verses (*JASB*. N.S. X. 98). But the Madhyapāḍā CP. of Viśvarūpasena, which has since been discovered, contains these additional verses (*IB*. 140 ff). The real ground for regarding Viśvarūpasena as the elder brother and predecessor of Keśavasena is v. 10 of Edilpur CP. I agree with Mr. N. G. Majumdar's interpretation of this verse (*IB*. 127; cf. also p. 120), according to which it contains a reference to king Viśvarūpasena, and he must, therefore, have preceded Keśavasena who issued the Edilpur CP.

[7] Cf. ll. 42 and 47 (*IB*. 146).

victory over the Muslims. In a verse, contained in all the three records,[1] the two kings are eulogised as "the day of destruction to the Yavanas," *i.e.* Muslims. The qualifying epithet applied to the Yavanas reads '*sagarga*' in the record of Viśvarūpasena and '*sagandha*'[2] in that of Keśavasena. The meaning of these terms is not quite clear,[3] but there is hardly any doubt that the verse refers to the struggle between the two Sena kings and the Muslim chiefs who were ruling over a portion of Northern and Western Bengal.

The inference from these records about the political condition of Bengal is supported by *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī*. It states that the Muslim chiefs ruled over "the territory of Lakhnawati" which had "two wings on either side of the river Gang," *viz.*, 'Ral' (Rāḍhā) on the western side, and 'Barind' (Varendra) on the eastern (p. 584), while 'Bang,' *i.e.* (Vaṅga or Eastern and Southern Bengal) was ruled by the descendants of Lakshmaṇasena even when that work was composed.[4] Regarding the relations of the Muslim kingdom with Vaṅga, we have two different statements in the book. With reference to the Sultan Ghiyāsuddin 'Iwaz, we are told that "the parts round about the state of Lakhnawati such as Jajnagar, the countries of Bang, Kámrud [Kāmarūpa], and Tirhut, all sent tribute to him; and the whole of that territory named Gaur passed under his control" (pp. 587-88). A few pages later we are informed that when in 624 A.H. (=1226-27 A.D.) Nāsiruddin Mahmud Shah, son of Iyaltimish, the Sultan of Delhi, invaded Lakhnawati, this city was left unprotected as 'Sultan Ghiyāsuddin had led an army towards the territory of Kámrud and Bang.' Nāsiruddin easily captured Lakhnawati, and Ghiyāsuddin had to return from his expedition to Kámrud and Bang (pp. 594-95). Thus we may safely infer from the Hindu and Muslim evidences, that for nearly half a century Bang could not be subdued by the Muslim rulers of Lakhnawati, and though they might have occasionally gained some

[1] v. 21 of Edilpur CP. (*IB.* 123-24); v. 17 of Madanapāḍā CP. (*IB.* 135).

[2] This was the reading of James Prinsep in 1838 (*JASB.* VII. 43 ff). As the plate is lost and the facsimile published by Prinsep (in which some spots were retouched by him) is the only available reproduction of the record, it is difficult to be sure of the reading. As this verse is reproduced in Madanapāḍā CP. where the corresponding word reads clearly as '*sagarga*,' it is very probable that Prinsep misread this word as '*sagandha*.' Mr. N. G. Majumdar in his edition of Edilpur CP. accepts the word as '*sagarga*' (*IB.* 124).

[3] Mr. Javaswal took 'Garga' to mean 'Garjha' *i.e.* Gharjistan and held that Keśavasena defeated Muslim raiders led by Muhammad Ghori (*JBORS.* 1918, p. 171). This is, however, a pure guess.

[4] p. 558. As the author refers to events of 658 A.H. (1260 A.D.), the work must have been finished in or after that year. He visited Lakhnawati between 640 and 643 A.H. (1242-1245 A.D.) and it is just possible that his statement about Lakshmaṇasena's descendants ruling in Bengal may refer to this period.

successes against it and levied tribute, they sometimes also met with failure, and the Sena rulers could justly claim victory against them.

The known reign-periods of the two brothers Viśvarūpasena and Keśavasena exceed seventeen years, and their rule probably covered at least a quarter of a century. As Lakshmaṇasena was on the throne in A.D. 1205, his two sons may be regarded as having ruled till at least A.D. 1230. One of the records of Viśvarūpasena refers to Kumāra Sūryasena and Kumāra Purushottamasena[1] as donors of lands to Brāhmaṇas. They were evidently members of the royal family and probably sons of Viśvarūpasena, but there is no evidence to show that they ever ascended the throne. But as we learn from *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī* that the descendants of Lakshmaṇasena ruled in Bengal (Bang) at least up to 1245 A.D., and probably up to 1260 A.D.,[2] it is almost certain that Viśvarūpasena and Keśavasena were succeeded by other members of the family. Nothing is, however, definitely known about them.[3]

There is no doubt that the final extinction of the Sena power is due as much to the pressure of the Muslim invaders as to the rebellions of feudal chiefs. The rise of an independent chief Ḍommaṇapāla in the Khāḍī district in or some time before 1196 A.D. has already been referred to above.[4] The loss of power and prestige after the Muslim conquest of Western and Northern Bengal induced other local chiefs to assert their independence. One such chief was Raṇavaṅkamalla Śrī-Harikāladeva who ruled over the kingdom of Paṭṭikerā in Tippera in A.D. 1221.[5] About the same time the Deva family established a powerful kingdom beyond the Meghnā river.

[1] Madhyapāḍā (Sāhitya Parishat) CP. ll. 54, 57-58 (*IB.* 147). MM. Śāstrī read the first name as Sadāsena (*IHQ.* II. 77).

[2] *Supra* p. 226, f.n. 4.

[3] For an account of the Sena kings preserved in Bengali traditions see App. IV. N. Vasu refers to a king called Mādhavasena who issued a Grant in Śaka 1145 (=1223 A.D.). He says that a facsimile of the plate is given on p. 516 of Atkinson's *Kumayun* (*JASB.* LXV. 28). But this book, consisting of only 48 pages, contains no reference to the king or the CP. Atkinson, however, refers elsewhere to "an inscription at the great temple of Jageswar beyond Almora which, though very imperfect, allows the name Mādhavasena to be read" (*Notes on the History of the Himalaya of the N. W. P. of India*, Ch. III. 50, IV. 15). No facsimile of the inscription is given, and Atkinson assigns the date 1123 A.D. to this king on the authority of Prinsep. It is difficult to regard Mādhavasena as a Sena king of Bengal on the basis of Atkinson's statement or the tradition that chiefs of Sukhet and Mandi were descended from Sena kings. A verse of Mādhavasena is quoted in *Sadukti-karṇāmṛita* (*JASB.* N.S. II. 172) and he may belong to the royal Sena family. But we have as yet no definite evidence of it.

[4] *Supra* pp. 222-23.

[5] For a detailed account with reference to authorities cf. Chap. IX. § 2.

King Dāmodara of this family is known to have ruled over the districts of Tippera, Noakhali and Chittagong from A.D. 1231 to 1243. A later king, Daśarathadeva, probably of the same family, also ruled in the Dacca district with Vikramapura as his capital city, and was probably on the throne in the year A.D. 1283.[1]

All the while the Senas seem to have maintained a precarious existence. The name of a king Madhusena is found in the colophon of a MS. of *Pañcharakshā*.[2] He is styled '*parama-saugata-parama-rājādhirāja*' and '*Gauḍeśvara*,' and the date is given as Śaka 1211. Whether this Buddhist king Madhusena, ruling in 1289 A.D., belonged to the well-known royal Sena family, it is difficult to say. The locality over which he ruled is also difficult to determine. For Northern and Western Bengal now formed the dominions of the Muslim rulers of Lakhnawati, and Eastern Bengal had passed into the hands of the Deva family. It is just possible that he was ruling in an obscure corner of Southern or Western Bengal, or had seized Eastern Bengal from Daśarathadeva or his successor. Madhusena, who flourished in the last quarter of the thirteenth century A.D., is the last known ruler[3] of Bengal with the name-ending *-sena* who might have inherited the pretensions, if not the power, of the Senas, and kept up the traditions of their mighty and powerful kingdom. In any case, the great Sena family passes out of the history of Bengal with the close of the thirteenth century A.D.

In spite of its ignoble end, the short period of Sena rule in Bengal constitutes an important landmark in its history. A succession of three able and vigorous rulers consolidated the whole province into a united and powerful kingdom such as probably it had never been since the death of Devapāla three hundred and fifty years before. By their strong advocacy of the orthodox Hindu faith, the Senas helped it to attain the position of supremacy in Bengal which it had long ago secured in the rest of India. The Sena period also saw the high-water mark of development of Sanskrit

[1] For a detailed account with reference to authorities cf. Chap. IX. § 1.

[2] The colophon runs thus: "*Parameśvara-parama-saugata-parama-rājādhirāja-Śrīmad-Gauḍeśvara-Madhusena-devakānāṁ pravardhamāna-vijayarājye yatrāṅkenāpi Śaka-narapateḥ Śakābdāḥ 1211 Bhādra di 2.*" MM. H. P. Śāstrī who has given an account of the MSS. (Sastri-*Cat.* I. 117; Entry No. 77. MS. No. 4078) wrongly read *parama-mahārājādhirāja.*' He also reads '*Śrīmān-Gauḍeśvara.*' There seems to be a letter after Madhusena, which MM. Śāstrī ignores and I am unable to read. Perhaps, N. Vasu had this Madhusena in mind when he stated that one Madhusena is referred to in a manuscript as having ruled in Vikramapura in A.D. 1272 (*VJI.* 358).

[3] The name of a king of Bengal named Chandrasena is said to have been mentioned in a Sanskrit Ins. which is now broken up and built into a mosque at Mangalkot in the Katwa sub-division of Burdwan district [*AS(E)*. 1911-12, p. 8, para 9]. No further account of this inscription or of the king has appeared as yet.

literature in Bengal. Buddhism, in its last phase, was a disintegrating force in religion and society, and there can be hardly any doubt that its predominance in Bengal was the main contributing factor to the phenomenal success of Islam in this region. That Hindu society, religion, and culture in Bengal even partially succeeded in surviving the onslaughts of Islam is mainly due to the new vigour and life infused into them by the sturdy Hindu ruling family of Karṇāṭa. But in spite of all the good that they had done, their foreign origin and the short duration of their rule perhaps stood in the way of the growth of that united national life which alone could have enabled Bengal to withstand the irresistible advance of the Muslims in a manner more befitting its past history. The Muslim conquest of Bengal, after the overthrow of the rest of Northern India, was perhaps inevitable in the long run, but the way in which Bihar and half of Bengal passed into their hands, almost without any opposition worth the name, has cast a slur on the courage, the prowess, and the political organisation of the people. Even the most heroic resistance and successful defence of East Bengal for nearly a century against the Muslim power ruling over the rest of Northern India have not succeeded in removing the stain from the fair name of Bengal. History, in this respect, may be said to have repeated itself five and a half centuries later. For we mark the same contrast between the ease with which Bengal was conquered by the British and the sturdy opposition they received in Upper and Central India, Deccan, and South Indian Peninsula. Whether it is a mere chance coincidence or due to some fatal inherent defects in national character, it is difficult to say. We may attribute the evil to that unknown and unknowable factor called fate or destiny which sometimes plays no inconsiderable part in the affairs of men, or it may be that the genius of the people of Bengal, in spite of their intellectual brilliance and other virtues, is not amenable to even an elementary sense of discipline and organisation calling for unity in the face of a common danger. Facts may be cited in favour of both the view-points, and in the absence of necessary data for a correct judgment on these and allied problems of the history of Bengal, it is a fruitless task to pursue these speculations to any length. There is, however, no justification for the current view that makes Lakshmaṇasena and Sirāj-ud-daula scape-goats for all the disasters that befell Bengal. They were certainly more courageous and patriotic than most of their counsellors and officials, and were perhaps more sinned against than sinning. A large share of the blame must also attach to the people at large, but for whose moral and political lapse we could hardly expect the development of a situation like those to which the unfortunate kings succumbed.

APPENDIX I

THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE SENA KINGS

There are, broadly speaking, two radically different views about the dates of the Sena kings. One is based on the assumption that the era current in North Bihar and known as *Lakshmaṇa Saṁvat*, or in its contracted form *La Saṁ*, started from 1119-20 A.D. and commemorates the accession of Lakshmaṇasena.[1] The other is based on the identification of 'Rāe Lakhmaṇīah' of *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī* with king Lakshmaṇasena, and on certain passages in two literary works of Vallālasena, *viz.* *Dānasāgara* and *Adbhutasāgara*. These refer to Śaka 1081 or 1082 (1159 or 1160 A.D.) as the beginning of Vallālasena's reign, Śaka 1091 (1169 A.D.) as the date of the composition of *Dānasāgara*, and 1089 or 1090 (1167 or 1168 A.D.) as the commencement of *Adbhutasāgara*.[2] The two different view-points, with full references, were summed up in 1921 by the writer of the present chapter who opposed the first and expounded at length the second view.[3] Since then important arguments have been brought forward in support of it. Mr. Chintaharan Chakravarti has shown that according to the correct reading of the colophon of an anthological work called *Sadukti-karṇāmṛita*, it was composed by Śrīdharadāsa, the court-poet of Lakshmaṇasena, in Śaka 1127 (1205 A.D.) during the reign of that king.[4] Further, Mr. R. D. Banerji's contention that the specific dates found in the literary works of Vallālasena are spurious, as they are not found in some manuscripts of the texts, has been considerably weakened. For these dates also occur in a newly discovered manuscript of one of these works, and are referred

[1] This view was propounded by Kielhorn (*IA*. XIX. 1 ff). Its staunchest supporter was Mr. R. D. Banerji (*JASB*. IX. 271ff and numerous other articles). It was followed by Mr. S. Kumar (*IA*. 1915. pp. 215 ff), Mr. N. G. Majumdar (*IA*. 1919, pp. 171-76), and Mr. K. P. Jayaswal (*JBORS*. IV. 267) among others.

[2] The date of the commencement of *Adbhutasāgara* is given as 1090 Śaka (1168 A.D.) in the Bombay MSS. of that work (Bhandarkar's *Report on the Search for Sanskrit* MSS. *during 1887-88, and 1890-91*, p. LXXXV) and as 1089 Śaka (1167 A.D.) in the text edited by Muralidhar Jha (Prabhakari Co., Benares 1905).

[3] *JASB*. N.S. XVII (1921). pp. 7-16. The passages in the literary works of Vallālasena, and a detailed discussion of Mr. R. D. Banerji's views will be found there. Some passages were originally noticed by Mr. Manomohan Chakravarti (*JASB*. 1906, p. 17) and discussed by Mr. Banerji (*JASB*. N.S. IX. 277). Other passages were noted and discussed by Mr. Chintaharan Chakravarti (*IHQ*. III. 186; V. 133) and Mr. D. C. Bhattacharya (*IHQ*. III. 574ff; *IA*. LI. 145ff).

[4] *IHQ*. III. 188.

to not only in certain introductory or concluding passages which are omitted in certain manuscripts of the text, but are scattered throughout the text of *Abdhutasāgara.*[1] These passages were evidently known to Rājā Todarmall who refers to " the position of the Great Bear, according to the *Adbhutasāgara,* in the Śaka year 1082 (1160-61 A.D.) while Vallālasena was ruling."[2] Some of the passages containing the dates are also quoted by the famous Smṛiti writer Śrīnātha Āchārya Chūḍāmaṇi who flourished about 1500 A.D.[3]

On the whole, the first view, maintained by R. D. Banerji, is hardly supported now by any scholar, and the chronology of the Sena kings, based on the dates furnished by the literary works for Vallālasena and Lakshmaṇasena, is now generally accepted. The chronology of the Sena kings may thus be drawn up as follows :—

Name of king.		*Known duration of reign.*	*Year of accession.*
Vijayasena	..	62 (? or 32)	A.D. 1095 (1125)
Vallālasena	..	11	" 1158
Lakshmaṇasena	..	27	" 1179
Viśvarūpasena	..	14	" 1206
Keśavasena	..	3	" 1225

Mr. J. C. Ghosh[4] fixes the date of Vijayasena's accession in A.D. 1088 on the strength of astronomical data contained in the Barrackpur Grant. His arguments, particularly as they involve emendation of the text of the inscription, do not carry much weight. It may be added that calculating on the same astronomical data, Mr. C. C. Das Gupta places the accession of Vijayasena in 1095 A.D.[5]

On the other hand, as already noted above,[6] there are grave doubts about the reading of the date in Barrackpur Grant as 62, and regarding it as his regnal year. Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar's suggestion to refer it to Vikrama-Chālukya era would give the date 1137-38 A.D. for Vijayasena, and we may place his accession approximately at 1125 A.D. The same result is attained if we read the date as 32, and regard it as his regnal year. On the whole, a date near about 1125 A.D. appears to be more reasonable than the date *c.* 1095 A.D. now generally assumed.

A passage in *Adbhutasāgara* refers to the year '*bhuja-vasu-daśa*—1081' as the beginning (*rājyādi*) of Vallālasena's reign.

[1] *IHQ.* III. 574ff; V. 133-35; *JRAS.* 1930. 3ff; *IA.* LI. 145ff, 153ff.

[2] P. V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra,* Vol. I, p. 300. Todarmall's reference to Vallālasena ruling in 1160-61 A.D. takes away the force of the argument based on Abul-Fazl's statement in *Akbarnāmā* (II. 13) that the *La Saṁ* commemorates the accession of Lakshmaṇasena in 1119 A.D.

[3] *JASB.* N.S. XI. 347.

[4] *IC.* IV. 227.

[5] *ABI.* XIII. 217.

[6] *Supra* p. 210, f.n. 3.

Unfortunately the interpretation of this short passage involves two difficulties. In the first place, it is uncertain whether the expression *rājyādi* should be taken literally to mean the first year of the reign,[1] or, in a general way, to denote the earlier part of the reign.[2] Secondly, the date given in words means 1082, while it is given in figures as 1081. One of these must be wrong. It has been suggested that the expression *bhuja* (=2) is a mistake for *bhū* (=1).[3] On the other hand, it is equally plausible that 1081 in figures is an error for 1082. It is not possible to arrive at a definite conclusion on any of these points. Although it is difficult to attach much weight to the argument based on astronomical grounds by which Mr. J. C. Ghosh accepts 1081 Śaka current (1158 A.D.) as the year 1 of Vallālasena's reign,[4] it may provisionally be accepted on general grounds.

The exact date of the accession of Lakshmaṇasena depends upon the correct interpretation of the colophon of *Sadukti-karṇāmṛita.* It gives the Śaka year 1127 (1205 A.D.) as corresponding to the regnal year of Lakshmaṇasena expressed by the somewhat unusual and ambiguous chronogram "*rasaika-viṁśebde.*" Mr. Chintaharan Chakravarti, who arrived at this reading by a collation of different manuscripts, interpreted it to mean 27 (*i.e. rasa*=6+21).[5] Mr. Girindra Mohan Sarkar emended the expression to *rājyaika-viṁśebde*[6] and took it to mean the 21st year. Both the suggestions are equally plausible, but the first one is preferred on the ground that according to *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsiri,* Lakshmaṇasena was eighty years old in or about 1200 A.D. and it is less likely that he lived beyond the age of 90.[7] Here, again, it is interesting to note that both the dates have been supported on astronomical grounds.[8] In view of many instances of this kind, it is difficult to accept Mr. D. C. Bhattacharya's view, based on astronomical grounds, that Viśvarūpasena was ruling in 1247 A.D.,[9] though the date is not an improbable one.

1 This is the view of Mr. Manomohan Chakravarti (*op. cit.*), R. P. Chanda (*GR.* 62) and Mr. J. C. Ghosh (*IC.* IV. 228).

2 *JASB.* N.S. XVII. 11, f.n. 6.

3 *IC.* IV. 228-29.

4 *Ibid.* It is curious to note that Mr. C. C. Das Gupta gives 1157 A.D. as the beginning of Vallālasena's reign although, like Mr. Ghosh, he bases his argument on the astronomical data furnished by the Naihati copper-plate and cites the authority of S. Pillai (*ABI.* XIII. 215-16).

5 *IHQ.* III. 188.

6 *JL.* XVI. 18-19; cf. also *IC.* IV. 231.

7 For he would be aged 91 in 1211 A.D. which, according to the second view, would correspond to his 27th regnal year when the Bhāwal CP. was issued.

8 *EI.* XXI. 215-16; *IC.* IV. 231.

9 *IHQ.* III. 576.

LAKSHMAṆASENA ERA

In view of the chronology adopted above, the epoch of Lakshmaṇa *Saṁvat viz.* 1108 or 1119-20 A.D.,[1] cannot be regarded as the date of the accession of Lakshmaṇasena. It is, therefore, necessary to discuss the origin of that Era.

The first point to remember in this connection is that no Sena king, not even the two sons of Lakshmaṇasena, ever used that era, and that there is no evidence that it was ever known, far less used, in Bengal during the Sena period, or within the next three centuries.[2] This raises grave doubts about the foundation of the era by Lakshmaṇasena or any other Sena ruler of Bengal.

The second point to be noted is the somewhat peculiar phraseology used in the early inscriptions dated in this era. The dates of two inscriptions of Aśokachalla at Bodh-Gayā and one of Jayasena, lord of Pīṭhī, at Jānibighā are expressed as follows:

1. *Śrīmal-Lakhvaṇa(kshmaṇa)-senasy=ātīta-rājye Saṁ 51.*[3]
2. *Śrīmal-Lakshmaṇasena-deva-pādānām=atīta-rājye Saṁ 74.*[4]
3. *Lakshmaṇasenasy=ātīta-rājye Saṁ 83.*[5]

Dr. Kielhorn,[6] and following him Mr. R. D. Banerji,[7] held that in the above expressions the years were counted from the commencement of the Era of Lakshmaṇasena, but his reign was a thing of the past. Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri also accepted this view,[8] but he rightly recognised that as Lakshmaṇasena, king of the Sena dynasty of Bengal, was ruling long after the years 51 and 74 of the Era which commenced in 1119-20 A.D., king Lakshmaṇasena, who founded this Era and died before its 51st year (*i.e.* 1170 A.D.), must be a different ruler of that name. The fact that Jayasena, lord of Pīṭhī, issued one of the three records containing a date in that Era, and his father

[1] The different views about the epoch of the Era have been discussed later (See *infra* pp. 237-39).

[2] MM. H. P. Śāstrī points out that Bengali MSS. dated in *La Saṁ* are not met with in South and East Bengal, and have only been found in Dinajpur. 'Most of these MSS. are on palm-leaves and above two hundred years old' (*Notices of Sanskrit* MSS., Vol. XI. p. 12). He refers to two MSS. dated 435 and 372 *La Saṁ* (*Cat. Durbar Library, Nepal*, I. 33, 51).

Three MSS. of the Dacca University (Nos. 139, 523, and 2589) bear dates in *La Saṁ*. In the first only the hundredth figure 4 is legible. The second gives the date 449. The third is dated in the year 424 of the Gauḍa king. The Era was probably introduced into Bengal from Mithilā in course of the fifteenth century A.D. when there was a close association between the two provinces in connection with studies in Nyāya.

[3] *EI.* XII. 29. [4] *EI.* XII. 30. [5] *IA.* XLVIII. 47.

[6] *IA.* XIX. 2. [7] *JASB.* N.S. IX. 2. [8] *AJV.* Part 2, p. 4.

Buddhasena is mentioned in an inscription as a contemporary of Aśokachalla during whose reign the other two records were issued, led Dr. Raychaudhuri to conclude that king Lakshmaṇasena who founded the Era 'must have been the founder of the Sena dynasty of Pīṭhī.'[1] The suggestion is, no doubt, a valuable one, but there is no evidence that the Sena dynasty of Pīṭhī existed as early as 1119-20 A.D.[2] far less that its founder was powerful enough to establish an Era which remained in use for centuries.

The main question, however, is whether we are justified in interpreting the dates of Bodh-Gayā and Jānibighā inscriptions in the manner suggested by Kielhorn. Reference may be made in this connection to similar expressions for indicating dates used with the name of Govindapāla, noted above.[3] On the analogy of the interpretation adopted by Kielhorn, Banerji, and Raychaudhuri, we have to assume that an Era was founded by Govindapāla, and that he died before year 14 of that Era. It would, therefore, follow that two different Eras were founded within a few years, and both were current together in Gayā from 1161 to 1199 A.D. Further, if the Senas of Pīṭhī had set up the Era in 1119 A.D., their rule as well as the use of their Era must have been in abeyance in Gayā during the period of Govindapāla's rule.

Before we can accept the interpretation suggested by Kielhorn, it must be satisfactorily explained why the inscription refers to the *atīta-rājya* of Lakshmaṇasena, and ignores altogether the name of the kings (Viśvarūpasena or Keśavasena, if we accept the view of Mr. Banerji, and Buddhasena and Jayasena, if we accept the view of Dr. Raychaudhuri) of the same dynasty who were reigning at the time the records were actually drawn up. In the case of the Gupta records, the date in the Gupta Era is used along with the name of the reigning king, and not a single record uses an expression like "*Chandraguptasy=ātīta-rājye saṁ.*"

It is difficult on these grounds to accept either the interpretation of the above dates proposed by Dr. Kielhorn, or the theory of Dr. Raychaudhuri which is based on it. As regards the latter, it may be pointed out that we have no evidence of the existence of a king named Lakshmaṇasena, other than the Sena ruler of Bengal, who reigned in Mithilā or the Gayā district, where the Era associated with this name is known to have been in use. We should not, therefore, presume the existence of a new king of that name, until it proves impossible to give a rational interpretation of the association of the well-known king Lakshmaṇasena with that Era. Further,

[1] *AJV.* Part 2. p. 5. [2] *Cf. IC.* II. 579. [3] See *supra* p. 171, f.n. 1.

as early as the fifteenth century A.D., Lakshmaṇasena of the era is definitely stated to be the lord of Gauḍa.[1]

The only way by which we can reconcile the known facts is to suppose that the Era was started in Bihar, and though associated with the name of the Sena king Lakshmaṇasena of Bengal, it was not founded by him; as otherwise it would have been in use also in his home-province of Bengal.

The exact circumstances under which an Era was set up in Bihar and associated with the famous king Lakshmaṇasena of Bengal are not known to us.[2] But some plausible suggestions may be offered.

It is probable that when the Pāla kingdom in Gayā was finally destroyed, the people, specially the Buddhists, continued for some time to count their dates with reference to the last Buddhist Pāla king,—Govindapāla. Again when the Muslim invaders destroyed the Hindu kingdoms in Bihar and Bengal, the people, unwilling to refer to the *pravardhamāna-vijaya-rājya* of the foreign conquerors, counted the dates with reference to the destruction of the last Hindu kingdom.[3] Roughly speaking, therefore, the Era referred to in the records of Aśokachalla and Jayasena may be regarded as having started about 1200 A.D.[4]

It is interesting to note that eras dating from about the same epoch were current also in Bengal. One of them is known as Balāli San and the other Parganāti San. The epoch of the former falls in A.D. 1199 and that of the latter, 1202-3 A.D. Considering that the known instances of the use of these eras are all of later date, it may be presumed that both these eras commemorated the destruc-

[1] *JASB*. N.S. XXII. 373. See *supra* p. 233, f.n. 2.

[2] For the different views on the origin of *La Saṁ* cf. V. A. Smith, *Early History of India*, 3rd ed., pp. 418ff; *BI*. 328.

[3] For a full discussion on this point cf. *JASB*. N.S. XVII. 9-10. Mr. D. C. Bhattacharya accepts this interpretation of *gata-rājya* (*IHQ*. VI. 166-67).

[4] This is corroborated by the fact that Aśokachalla is mentioned in an inscription found at Gayā and dated in the year 1813 of the Buddhist Nirvāṇa Era (*IA*. 1881, pp. 341 ff). It is well-known that the Buddhists of Ceylon have preserved a reckoning according to which the Nirvāṇa Era started in 543 B.C., and no other Nirvāṇa Era is known to have been current in twelfth and thirteenth centuries A.D in India. The influence of the Ceylonese monks in Gayā at this time is indicated by the reference to Siṁhalese community of Buddhist monks at Bodh-Gayā in the inscriptions of Aśokachalla. The village granted by Jayasena to the Bodh-Gayā temple was for the residence of a Ceylonese monk, and his father Buddhasena made grants to a number of Ceylonese *sthaviras* at Bodh-Gayā. It is, therefore, natural to take the year 1813 of the Nirvāṇa Era as equivalent to 1270 A.D. This would fit in with the dates 51 and 74 of Aśokachalla referred to an era commencing about 1200 A.D.

tion of the Hindu kingdom in Northern and Western Bengal at about 1200 A.D.[1]

The view propounded above does not, however, explain the epoch of the *La Saṁ* current in Mithilā, *viz.* 1119-20 A.D. But here too, we may trace the same idea of deliberately setting up an artificial era associated with the last Hindu ruler; only, instead of counting from the end of the reign, which always evokes a painful memory, people of a later age counted from his birth. It has been stated by Minhāj that at the time of the Muslim raid on Nadiyā Lakshmaṇasena was eighty years old.[2] As the event took place within a few years of 1200 A.D., we may place the birth of Lakshmaṇasena about 1120 A.D., which agrees remarkably well with the epoch of the *La Saṁ* suggested by Kielhorn, *viz.* 1119-20 A.D. It may be a mere coincidence that the birth of Lakshmaṇasena falls in a year with reference to which an era called *Lakshmaṇa Samvat* is current in Mithilā. But then it must be regarded as a very strange coincidence indeed. On the whole, in the present state of our knowledge, this seems to be the least objectionable way of explaining the origin of the *La Saṁ* in Mithilā. We must, however, reject the view, held by some, that Vallālasena founded the Era on the occasion of the birth of his son Lakshmaṇasena.[3] For then it is very likely that the Era would have gained currency also in Bengal.

The artificial character of the Era, set up at a later time with reference to a past event, perhaps explains the great discrepancy in the initial years of that era as calculated from the different instances of its use. Dr. Kielhorn's conclusion, now generally accepted, that the first year of this era began in A.D. 1119-20, was based on a study of six records where the dates could be verified by astronomical

[1] For a detailed account of these eras, *cf.* Mr. J. M. Roy *Dhākār Itihāsa*, II. 393; Dr. N. K. Bhattasali, *IA.* LII. 314 ff. Mr. D. C. Bhattacharya has recently given an account of some old documents in Noakhali and Tippera districts, dated in that era. He finds by calculation that the era started from 1201-2 A.D., but "in Sarail Pargana of the Tippera district, where also the era was in regular use, it started from 1199 A.D." A MS. dated in Parganāti Era 327 and Śaka 1451 (=1529 A.D.) shows that it was the current local era in parts of Bengal, before Bengali *San* came to be introduced in Akbar's time (*IHQ.* XIV. 741). Sometimes the era was named after a particular locality: *e.g.*, in a Bengali MS., the era is referred to as 'Pargane Bhulua *San*' 487 (Bengali MS. No. 2025 of the Dacca University).

[2] *Nāsirī.* trans. pp. 554-55.

[3] A verse in *Laghubhārata* says that while Vallāla was engaged in warfare in Mithilā, Lakshmaṇasena was born at Vikramapura. Mr. N. Vasu suggests that Vallāla introduced the *La Saṁ* to commemorate the birth of his son (*VJI.* 351-52). The same view is upheld on the same grounds by Mr. P. C. Barat in *JRAS.* 1930, p. 8. But this cannot be reconciled with the chronology of the Pāla and Sena kings suggested above.

calculations. On the other hand, the modern reckoning, current in Mithilā, would place the beginning of *La Saṁ* in 1108 A.D.[1] Mr. P. N. Misra has shown after an elaborate analysis, that out of sixteen dates of the *Lakshmaṇa Samvat* hitherto found with data for verification, only nine dates work out satisfactorily with the epoch 1119-20 A.D., and only ten with the epoch 1107-8 A.D.[2] An analysis of eighteen dates in *La Saṁ*, occurring along with equivalent dates in *Śaka* or *Samvat* or both, gives the following results as to the initial year.[3]

Initial year in A.D.	*Number of records.*
1120	3
1119	2
1115	2
1113	1
1112	1
1110	2
1108	3
1107	4

In order to explain these discrepancies, Mr. K. P. Jayaswal propounded the view that in the time of Akbar, beginning with 1556 A.D., the Fasli era—a lunar reckoning—was promulgated under the name *San*, and since that time '*La Saṁ* received a lunar calculation,' and a 'fixed figure was deducted from the current *San* year to obtain *La Saṁ*.' This, in his opinion, explains the varying, gradually increasing, difference in the eighteen *La Saṁ* years referred to above. This theory is not, however, borne out by facts as the following examples will show :

La Saṁ	*Year in* A.D. *as counted by the equivalent Śaka era.*	*Difference.*
(1) 505	1624	1119
(2) 522	1637	1115
(3) 614	1724	1110
(4) 624	1737	1113
(5) 633	1741	1108
(6) 727	1837	1110

It will be seen that in one case (Nos. 1 and 2), within a period of seventeen years, there was a difference of four years in the reckoning of *La Saṁ*, whereas in another case (Nos. 3 and 6) there was no

[1] *JASB.* N.S. XXII 365. On this ground Mr. G. R. Grierson (*IA.* 1899, p. 57) regarded 1108-9 A.D. as the initial year of *La Saṁ* in opposition to the views of Kielhorn.

[2] *JASB.* N.S. XXII. 385.

[3] The list was compiled by Mr. K. P. Jayaswal (*JBORS.* XX. 21).

difference after an interval of 113 years. Again during ten years (Nos. 3 and 4), the difference was three years, but during the next nine years (4 and 5) the difference is one of five years. Besides, the difference is not one of gradual increase or decrease with each passing year, as Nos. 3-6 would show.

Mr. Jayaswal concluded from an examination of the eighteen dates mentioned above that up to 1624 A.D. the dating in *La Saṁ* is on the basis of the era commencing in 1119-20 A.D.[1] Indeed this was the most vital part of his theory which sought to explain the discrepancy by the introduction of lunar year in Akbar's time. But he ignored a verse ascribed to Vidyāpati in which the date of the death of king Devasiṁha of Mithilā is given as *La Saṁ* 293 and *Śaka* 1324. This would mean that in the fifteenth century A.D. the initial year of *La Saṁ* was reckoned to be 1109 A.D.[2]

Even if we disregard this solitary verse, it is impossible, on the grounds mentioned above, to explain the discrepancy in the initial years of *La Saṁ* in the way suggested by Mr. Jayaswal. We must, therefore, hold that the initial year of the Era, as reckoned at different times and places, varied between 1108 and 1120 A.D. This can best be explained on the supposition that the *La Saṁ* was an artificial reckoning associated with an event of remote past, the date of which was not definitely known at the time when people first began to use the era. Considering that the error was within a limit of twelve years, the birth of Lakshmaṇasena may be regarded as the event.

[1] *JBORS.* xx. 22.

[2] *JASB.* N.S. xi. 418-19. Mr. Chakravarti expressed doubts about the genuineness of the verse on the ground that the date in *La Saṁ* does not agree with the Śaka date, according to the views of Kielhorn, which was then universally accepted. The other objection that, Śivasiṁha, the successor of Devasiṁha, is referred to as the ruling king in a manuscript dated *La Saṁ* 291 is met by himself when he says that if both the dates be true, it indicates that Śivasiṁha was ruling jointly with his father (*op. cit.* p. 422).

APPENDIX II

VALLALA-CHARITA

The text of *Vallāla-charita* was edited by MM. Haraprasād Śāstrī and published by the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1904, and an English translation of it by the same scholar was published three years earlier. The work was composed by Ānandabhaṭṭa in 1510 A.D. at the command of the ruler of Navadvīpa named Buddhimanta Khān,[1] an influential Rājā in Bengal. The author Ānandabhaṭṭa claims to be a descendant of one Anantabhaṭṭa, a Brāhmaṇa belonging to Southern India.[2]

Another work bearing the same name and edited by Hariśchandra Kaviratna was published in 1889, but it was pronounced by MM. Śāstrī to be spurious and unreliable. MM. Śāstrī says that he was not without suspicion that the text edited by him might be equally spurious. But on a careful examination of the two manuscripts copied in 1707 A.D. and the Bengali year 1198 (=1790-91 A.D.) he pronounced them to be genuine.[3]

MM. Śāstrī does not say on what grounds he declared the text edited by Kaviratna [to be referred henceforward as Text (I)] as spurious, but so far as can be judged from the internal evidence, both the texts stand on the same footing, and have drawn upon a common source of floating traditions. The Text (I) is divided into three parts, *Pūrva-khaṇḍam, Uttara-khaṇḍam* and *Pariśishṭam*. The first two are said to have been composed by Gopālabhaṭṭa, a teacher of the Vaidya king Vallālasena, at the command of his royal pupil in Śaka 1300[4] (Part II. vv. 163-165). The colophon of Part I, however, says that it was composed by Gopālabhaṭṭa and corrected by Ānandabhaṭṭa. The third part was composed by Ānandabhaṭṭa, a descendant of Gopālabhaṭṭa, in 1500 Śaka at the command of the ruler of Navadvīpa (Part III. vv. 39-42). We are

[1] This is stated in ch. XXVII, second part, vv. 15-16. According to the colophons, chs. XXI-XXIII were taken from *Vallāla-charita* by Śaraṇadatta. Ch. XXV is said to have been composed by Kālidāsa Nandī. The existing text is the *uttara-khaṇḍa* *i.e* second part (ch. I. v. 1). Chs. XXVI-XXVII are said to be *khila* or additions.

[2] Cf. colophon of ch. XXVII.

[3] Introduction to English translation, pp. V-VI.

[4] This date obviously does not agree with the statement that Gopālabhaṭṭa was a contemporary of Vallālasena. This is not necessarily a proof of modern forgery, but of the lateness and unhistorical character of the work. A modern forgerer would probably have given the correct date for Vallālasena.

told that Gopālabhaṭṭa could not complete the work for fear of punishment by the king (III. 1), and so Ānandabhaṭṭa completed the work after the destruction of the Senas (III. 40). This text consists mostly of genealogical topics and the crude accounts of the origin of various castes, but it also gives in a condensed form the main story of *Vallāla-charita* edited by MM. Śāstrī.[1]

This story may be summed up as follows:

"Once Vallālasena borrowed a crore of Rupees (*nishka*) from Vallabhānanda, the richest merchant of his time, for the purpose of conquering the king of Udantapura; but repeatedly defeated in battles in the neighbourhood of Maṇipur (or Faṇipur), he determined to make a grand effort and sent a messenger to Vallabha, who was a resident of Saṅkakoṭa, demanding a fresh loan. The demand was made with the following preamble: 'Because it has become absolutely necessary for us to march against the country of Kīkaṭa with a grand army composed of six divisions, Vallabha should immediately send a crore and a half of *Suvarṇas*.' In reply Vallabha agreed to pay the money only if the revenues of Harikelī were assigned to him in payment of the debts. This enraged Vallālasena who forcibly took possession of the wealth of a large number of *vaṇiks* (merchants) (Ch. II), and inflicted other hardships on them.

"Later, the *vaṇiks* offended the king by refusing to partake of dinner at the palace as no separate place was assigned to the Vaiśyas as distinct from the Sat-Śūdras (Ch. XXII). In this connection it was reported to Vallālasena that 'Vallabha, the leader of all the *vaṇiks*, was siding with the Pālas, and he was highly arrogant because the king of Magadha was his son-in-law.' On hearing this report the king became furious and declared that henceforth the Suvarṇavaṇiks should be regarded as Śūdras, and any Brāhmaṇa who officiates in their ceremonies, teaches them, or accepts gifts from them, will be degraded.

"In retaliation the *vaṇiks* got hold of all the slaves by giving twice or thrice the ordinary price, and all the other castes were in great distress for want of servants. Thereupon Vallālasena raised the social status of the Kaivartas and ordered that menial service should be their livelihood. Maheśa, the headman of the Kaivartas, was honoured with the rank and title of *Mahāmāṇḍalika*. Similarly, the Mālākāras (garland-makers), the Kumbhakāras (potters), and the Karmakāras (blacksmiths) were raised to the status of Sat-Śūdras. Finally the king ordered that the Suvarṇavaṇiks should be deprived of their holy threads. Many *vaṇiks* thereupon migrated to other countries. At the same time, observing great irregularities in higher ranks of society, Vallāla consulted those versed in the Vedas, and compelled many Brāhmaṇas and Kshatriyas to pass through purifying ceremonies. The low Brāhmaṇas, who were traders, were degraded from Brahmanhood altogether (ch. XXIII)."

It will be clear from the above summary, that like many other similar works composed in the 16th and 17th centuries A.D., *Vallāla-charita* was written definitely with a view to demonstrating that

[1] There are some differences in detail in the two accounts, but they are not material for our present purpose (cf. J. M. Roy, *Ḍhākār Itihāsa*, II. 446 ff. for these differences). The story in the *khila* or supplement is given in App. IV.

the Suvarṇavaṇiks[1] occupied a high status in society and were unjustly degraded to the present position by the capricious tyranny of Vallālasena. That *Vallāla-charita* cannot, therefore, be regarded as an historical text admits of no doubt. On the other hand, there is no reasonable ground for thinking that "it is a modern forgery palmed off on the unsuspecting editor," as Mr. R. D. Banerji says.[2]

We have definite evidence[3] that true facts of the history of Bengal during the Hindu period were not preserved, at least not available to the general people, in the 16th century A.D., and writers, mostly on social matters, tried to build up an historical account on the basis of current traditions, some of which probably had historical basis. So we may well believe, in the case of *Vallāla-charita*, that it has preserved some genuine traditions, but it is difficult to glean them out of a mass of legends. The caste (Brahmakshatra) and genealogy of the Senas are correctly stated.[4] The description of Vallālasena as a friend of Choḍagaṅga[5] may be accepted, because we know now that the two were contemporaries. The reference to the war with the Pālas fits in well with the history of the period, and is partly corroborated by the extinction of the Pāla rule in Magadha during the reign of Vallālasena. Further, as noted above,[6] the reference in *Vallāla-charita* to Vallālasena's expedition against Mithilā is supported by other traditions and historical facts. Finally, it must be admitted that the special favour shown by Vallālasena towards the Kaivartas, who so recently rebelled against the Pālas, and his particular animosity against the Suvarṇavaṇiks who were allies of, and related to, the Pālas, furnished an admirable background to the story in a correct historical setting, and it is difficult to believe that a modern forgerer was capable of doing this, specially before the discovery of *Rāmacharita*. Perhaps the *Vallāla-charita* contains the distorted echo of an internal disruption caused by the partisans of the Pāla dynasty which proved an important factor in the collapse of the Sena rule in Bengal.

[1] And also the Yugis, in Text (I) of *Vallāla-charita*.

[2] *EI.* XV. 281. Mr. J. M. Roy has also expressed similar views after pointing out the discrepancies between the different texts and the inaccuracies contained in them (*Ḍhākār Itihāsa*, 446-454). It is probable that the text was tampered with in recent times. For example, the date assigned to the death of Vallālasena—1028 Śaka (1106 A.D.)—in Ch. XXVII, v. 4, fits in with the theory generally held at the time the text was discovered, but is not supported by any old tradition, and is now definitely proved to be wrong.

[3] Cf. *An Indigenous History of Bengal* (*Proc. Ind. Hist. Records Commission*, Sixteenth Session, p. 59).

[4] Ch. XII. vv. 45, 48, 50-54. [5] Ch. XII. v. 52. [6] *Supra* p. 216.

APPENDIX III

MUSLIM INVASION OF BENGAL DURING THE REIGN OF LAKSHMAṆASENA

The only detailed account of the Muslim invasion of Bengal during the reign of Lakshmaṇasena is supplied by *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī*,[1] an historical work composed by Maulānā Minhāj-ud-din Abū-Umar-i-Usmān who held various high offices under the Sultans of Delhi. In 639 A.H. (=1241 A.D.), he was appointed Chief Qāzi of the Delhi kingdom and of the capital (p. xxvi). Next year he resigned the post and proceeded to Lakhnawati where he remained for two years (p. xxvii). It was evidently during this period that the author got his information about the history of Bengal chronicled by him. The work was actually composed later, and narrates historical events down to 658 A.H. (=1260 A.D.) (p. xxviii).

After referring to a successful attack on the monastery at the city of Bihār by Muhammad Bakhtyār[2] (pp. 551-52), the author narrates a silly anecdote about the birth of Rāe Lakhmaṇīah[3] (Lakshmaṇasena), whose seat of government was the city of 'Nūdīah,' and who was a very great 'Rāe' and had been on the throne for eighty years (p. 554). The author then proceeds to say that after the final conquest of the province of Bihar[4] by Muhammad, his fame reached the ears of king Lakshmaṇasena and his subjects.

[1] The text was printed in Calcutta in 1864 and translated into English by Major H. G. Raverty in 1881. The following account is based on this English translation, and references to its pages are given within brackets. A critical translation of the passage relating to the raid on Nadiyā has been published in *IHQ.* XVII. 92 ff. The points of difference, for our present purpose, are not very material.

[2] Raverty writes 'Muhammad-i-Bakht-yār,' but the simpler form has been used throughout the text.

[3] This is the name given by Minhāj and there is hardly any doubt that it refers to Lakshmaṇasena. The anecdote runs thus: "When the birth of Lakshmaṇa drew near, the astrologers observed that if the child were born then, he would never become king, but if born two hours later, he would reign for eighty years. The queen-mother having heard this commanded that she should be suspended with her head downwards, with her two legs bound together. At the auspicious hour she was taken down but died after giving birth to the child" (p. 555).

[4] It appears that Muhammad first captured by assault a large monastery in Bihar which he originally mistook for a fortified city (p. 552). He then visited Sultan Qutb-ud-Din at Delhi (p. 552). After his return from Delhi, Muhammad subjugated Bihar (556). Minhāj does not say to whom this province belonged, nor does he refer to any actual battle waged for its conquest.

Then a number of astrologers, wise men, and counsellors advised the king to leave the country as, according to the Śāstras (sacred scriptures), the country would shortly fall into the hands of the Turks (p. 556). On enquiry it was learnt that the external appearance of Muhammad tallied with the description of the Turkish conqueror as given in the Śāstras (p. 557). Thereupon most of the Brahmans and wealthy merchants fled to Eastern Bengal, Assam and other places, but Lakshmaṇasena did not follow their cowardly advice or example (p. 557). What followed may be best described in the author's own words:

"The following year after that, Muhammad Bakhtyār caused a force to be prepared, pressed on from Bihar, and suddenly appeared before the city of Nūdīah, in such wise that no more than eighteen horsemen could keep up with him, and the other troops followed after him. On reaching the gate of the city Muhammad Bakhtyār did not molest any one, and proceeded onwards steadily and sedately, in such manner that the people of the place imagined that mayhap his party were merchants and had brought horses for sale, and did not imagine that it was Muhammad Bakhtyār, until he reached the entrance to the palace of Rāe Lakhmaṇīah, when he drew his sword and commenced an onslaught on the unbelievers." (p. 557).

Lakshmaṇasena was taking his meals "when a cry arose from the gateway of the Rāe's palace and the interior of the city" (p 557). The cry from the city certainly indicates that the main army of Muhammad or at least a considerable portion of it had already entered into the city. By the time Lakshmaṇasena realised the actual state of affairs,

"Muhammad Bakhtyār had dashed forwards through the gateway into the palace, and had put several persons to the sword. The Rāe fled barefooted by the back part of his palace . . . . . When the whole of Muhammad Bakhtyār's army arrived, and the city and round about had been taken possession of, he there took up his quarters; and Rāe Lakhmaṇīah got away towards Sankanāt and Bang, and there the period of his reign shortly afterwards came to a termination His descendants, up to this time, are rulers in the country of Bang" (p. 558).

"After Muhammad Bakhtyār possessed himself of that territory [Rāe Lakhmaṇīah's], he left the city of Nūdīah in desolation, and the place which is [now] Lakhnawati he made the seat of Government" (p. 559).

It is obvious from the above account that Muhammad Bakhtyār made a sudden raid upon the city of Nadiyā where Lakshmaṇasena was staying. He evidently came by an unexpected route by forced marches. The story of Minhāj has given rise to the popular myth of the conquest of Bengal by eighteen Muslims. But even Minhāj says no such thing. Although only eighteen horsemen, according to him, formed the party of Muhammad when he entered the city, the main part of his army followed him at a short distance, and

had penetrated into the interior of the city before the general reached the palace and unsheathed his sword. The entire army was in the city before the raid was over.

The story of the unopposed entry of Muhammad and his eighteen followers into the city raises grave doubts about the truth of the details of the campaign. At a time when Nadiyā was apprehending an attack from the Turks, it is difficult to believe that the royal officers would remain ignorant of the movements of Muhammad even when he had crossed the frontiers of the Sena kingdom, and would readily admit a band of foreigners without any question. It would further appear from Minhāj's account that there was no military engagement even when the main army arrived. Indeed Minhāj would have us believe that the capital city of the Senas surrendered without a blow, and there was neither any army nor a general to defend it. It is admitted by Minhāj himself, that for nearly half a century after the raid the descendants of Lakshmaṇasena continued to rule in East Bengal. If the Sena political organisation could survive the occupation of half their kingdom by the Turks, and their army was strong enough to fight for half a century the Turkish power entrenched at their very door, it is difficult to accept the story of the fall of Nadiyā which presupposes a complete collapse of civil and military organisation of the Senas. It is very likely that the Senas were expecting Muhammad to advance from Bihar along the Ganges through the mountain passes near Rājmahal, and their main forces were posted there to intercept him when, by following unfrequented routes through the hills and jungles of Santal Parganas. Muhammad emerged into the plains of Bengal, and by forced marches reached Nadiyā before the news of his invasion could reach the main Sena army. But even making due allowance for such a strategy, and the inefficiency of the intelligence department of the Sena kings, it is difficult to believe that even the most ordinary precautions were not taken to defend the capital city, specially when the king himself was staying there. Minhāj himself tells us that for about a year Nadiyā was fearing a Turkish invasion, and hence a large number of its inhabitants had left the city. Yet we are to believe that the old king, who bravely chose to remain in the capital city, made absolutely no preparations for its defence, and the enemy had not to unsheathe their swords before they entered within its gates and began to massacre its inhabitants.

On the other hand, considering the antecedents of Minhāj, and the general nature of his historical work, it is hard to dismiss his account as a pure invention. The fact seems to be that he had no access to the contemporary official records, if there were any, in respect of Muhammad's campaign in Bengal and Bihar. The

absence of such records is easily explained when we remember that Muhammad was not an agent of the Delhi government, and no regular account of his expedition was likely to be preserved in the archives of Delhi. Nor did Muhammad found a royal dynasty in Bengal which could be expected to keep a systematic account of the career of that great adventurer. Minhāj was accordingly obliged to derive his account of the conquest of Bengal and Bihar from the oral evidence of persons nearly half a century after the events had taken place. In the case of Bihar, he tells us that he had the opportunity of meeting two old soldiers who took part in the expedition (p. 552). In the case of the raid on Nadiyā, Minhāj had evidently no such source, and, as he tells us, he got his information from 'trustworthy persons.' The mental calibre of these 'trustworthy persons' may be judged from the silly stories they told him about the birth of Lakshmaṇasena and the astrologers' prediction about the impending invasion of the Turks.[1] The lack of their historical knowledge is also proved by the statement that Lakshmaṇasena reigned for eighty years, which is palpably absurd. More than forty years had passed since the raid of Nadiyā and the establishment of the Muslim rule, and the story of the first Muslim conquest must have been embellished by popular imagination and the fire-side tales of old soldiers who naturally distorted the accounts of the old campaigns in order to paint in glowing colours their own valour and heroism. That various legends were current about this expedition is proved by the silly story recorded a century later by the author of *Futuh-us-sālātin*,[2] who did not evidently believe the account of Minhāj. It is probable that similar other stories were also current. Considering the materials on which Minhāj had to rely, we can hardly blame him for his account, but cannot certainly

[1] A similar story is related in *Chach-nāma* in connection with the conquest of Sind by Muhammad-ibn-Kāsim. When he was besieging Debal, the famous sea-port, a Brahman came to him and said "We have learnt from our science of the stars that the country of Sind will be conquered by the army of Islam . . . . . But as long as that flagstaff stands on the dome of the temple, it is impossible for you to take the fort." The standard was accordingly removed by throwing stones from the catapult (*Chach-nāma*, p. 81). It is, however, interesting to note that the historian Balādhuri relates this incident but makes no mention of the prophecy of the Brahman. It would thus appear that the story of the astrologers' prophecy about the conquest of India by the Muslims was widely current all over India for a long time, and the 'trustworthy persons' who gave a graphic account of the raid of Nadiyā to Minhāj merely drew upon the usual stock-in-trade of gossip-mongers. It is to be regretted that Minhāj did not possess the true instincts of an historian like Balādhuri; otherwise he would have found out the real character of his 'trustworthy persons' and rejected most of their stories as popular gossips.

[2] *IHQ*. XVII. 95-96.

accept it in all its details, specially when these are in conflict with the probable and commonsense view of things. That Nadiyā was the first conquest of Muhammad Bakhtyār may be readily accepted as a fact, but the details of the campaign must be taken with a great deal of reserve.

Even if we take the account of Minhāj at its face value, it is impossible to subscribe to the popular view that Lakshmaṇasena's cowardice was mainly responsible for the Muslim conquest of Bengal. The old king certainly showed more courage and determination than his subjects who deserted the city of Nadiyā in panic as soon as they heard of Muhammad's expedition in Bihar. He displayed greater wisdom, rationality and statesmanship than his counsellors who advised him to leave the country on the pretext that it was ordained in the *Śāstras* that this country would fall into the hands of the Turks. If he really fled from Nadiyā barefooted, it was only after the invaders had already taken possession of the city and a hostile force had actually entered into the palace. It is difficult to imagine what other course was open to him. If the story is true in all its details, which there are grave reasons to doubt, the judgment of posterity must go against the generals and ministers of state who either betrayed their king and master, or were guilty of culpable negligence in performing duties entrusted to them. The incidents of the Nadiyā raid, even as described by Minhāj, do not diminish in any way the credit for bravery and heroism which is justly due to the king who displayed his courage and military skill in numerous battlefields in Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, and Assam, and had led his victorious army as far as Benares and Allahabad. Minhāj, obviously echoing the popular notion current even forty years later, has described Lakshmaṇasena as a 'very great Rāe (king)' (p. 554), and it was reserved for poets, artists[1] and historians of our own time to tarnish the name and fame of this great king. The author of a thesis approved for the Ph.D. Degree of London University has even gone so far as to assert, with reference to Lakshmaṇasena's pillars of victories in Benares and Allahabad, that in view of "Lakshmaṇasena's craven flight without offering any resistance to the small force led by Bakhtyār Khiliji," we may unhesitatingly say that "the monuments of his greatness never existed elsewhere than in the poet's imagination."[2] Such statements need no comment.

[1] Poets like Nabin Chandra Sen and D. L. Roy, and artists like Nandalal Bose have given wide currency to this baseless slander among the people of Bengal.

[2] *TK.* 325.

It is interesting to quote, in this connection, the following appreciation of Lakshmaṇasena by Minhāj:

"Trustworthy persons have related to this effect, that, little or much, never did any tyranny proceed from his hand . . . . . The least gift he used to bestow was a *lak* of *kauṛis*. The Almighty mitigate his punishment (in hell)!" (p. 555-56).

Thus although Minhāj knew better than modern authors of the details of the "craven flight," he did not hesitate to bestow high praises upon Lakshmaṇasena. He even compared him with the great Sultan Qutbuddin, and prayed to God to mitigate his punishment in hell, a very unusual concession for the Muslim writer in respect of a Hindu ruler.

On the whole, in spite of the account of Minhāj, which must be regarded as of doubtful value, Lakshmaṇasena must be regarded as a great king endowed with manifold virtues. A brave warrior and a powerful ruler, he was at the same time a poet and a great patron of arts and letters; and his fame for charity and other personal virtues was long cherished with affection undiminished even by the grim tragedy which overtook him and his kingdom towards the close of his life.

The exact date of the raid on Nadiyā is a subject of keen controversy among scholars and cannot be determined with any degree of certainty. There is, however, a general consensus of opinion that it took place shortly before or after 1200 A.D.[1] Now a verse in *Seka-śubhodayā* gives the date of the expedition as 1124 Śaka=1202 A.D.[2] and the same date is given in *Pag Sam Jon Zang*.[3] We may, therefore, provisionally accept this date for the Muslim conquest of Nadiyā.

[1] This will be discussed in detail in Vol. II, chapter I.
[2] p. 9 of the text edited by Dr. Sukumar Sen.
[3] Index, p. x.

APPENDIX IV

TRADITIONAL ACCOUNT OF THE LATER SENA KINGS OF BENGAL

Traditions have preserved the names of various kings who succeeded Lakshmaṇasena. But they possess very little historical value. This will be evident from the genealogy of the Sena kings preserved in *Rājāvalī*,[1] one of the best texts of this kind. It begins with Dhīsena, daughter's son of king Jagatpāla of Rāḍhā, which was then subordinate to the empire of Delhi. Dhīsena, having become king of Rāḍhā, Vaṅga, Gauḍa and Varendra, easily obtained the throne of Delhi when his suzerain retired to forest. As he gained the empire without contest he became known as Vijayasena. Having himself become lord of Delhi, he made his eldest son Śukasena, ruler of Rāḍhā *etc.* Śukasena ruled for three years, and was succeeded by his younger brother Vallālasena, who ruled for twelve years (presumably at Rāḍhā). Then Vallālasena's son Lakshmaṇasena became ruler of Delhi and made his younger brother, Keśava, ruler of Rāḍhā *etc.* Lakshmaṇasena ruled as suzerain for ten years, and his successors ruled as suzerains in Delhi and subordinate rulers in Rāḍhā *etc.*, as shown in the following table :

Suzerains of Delhi.		*Rulers of Rāḍhā etc.*
1. Keśava	.. (16 years)	1. Mādhava (son of Keśava)
2. Mādhava	.. (11 ")	2. Sadāsena (younger brother of Mādhava)
3. Śūrasena	.. (8 ")	
4. Bhīmasena		
5. Kārtika		
6. Harisena		
7. Śatrughna		
8. Nārāyaṇasena		
9. Lakshmaṇa II	.. (36 years)	3. Jayasena (son of Nārāyaṇasena, No. 8)
10. Dāmodara	(11 ")	

Dāmodara was dethroned by the Chauhān ruler Dvīpasiṁha. He and his five successors ruled in Delhi for 150 years, when the last of them, Pṛithurāja, was killed by Yavana Shāhābuddin who became ruler of Delhi.

[1] For an account of *Rājāvalī*, cf. '*An Indigenous History of Bengal*' by R. C. Majumdar (*Proceedings of the Sixteenth Session of the Indian Historical Records Commission*, 1939. pp. 59 ff); also *SPP*. Vol. 46 (1346 B.S.), pp. 233 ff.

An account like this is a travesty of history, and does not deserve serious consideration even though it may contain some real historical names. The account of the Sena kings given in *Ain-i-Akbari*[1] is presumably based upon a text like this, for 'Madhu Sen and Sadā Sen' mentioned in it are evidently same as the two kings of Rāḍhā, Mādhava and Sadāsena, mentioned in the above genealogical list, while 'Kesu Sen and Raja Naujah (Nārāyan)' probably represent Keśava and Nārāyaṇasena. Madhusena and Nauja may also refer to kings Madhusena and Danuja-Mādhava-Daśaratha referred to in Ch. IX, Section I.

The account of Tāranātha[2] is equally disappointing. He mentions four early Sena kings, Lavasena, Kāśasena, Maṇitasena, and Rāthikasena, who together ruled for about eighty years. They were followed by the four kings Lavasena, Buddhasena, Haritasena and Pratītasena, who were minor kings, subordinate to the Turushkas. None of these can be safely regarded as a member of the Sena family ruling in Vaṅga after Lakshmaṇasena.

An echo of the final conquest of the Sena territory in Eastern Bengal by the Muslims is perhaps preserved in the tradition about Vallālasena's fight with Vāyādumba. The story is preserved in various forms, and the one given in *Vallāla-charita* may be regarded as typical of the rest. It may be summed up as follows:[3]

"King Vallālasena banished Dharmagiri, the *Mohant* (chief priest) of a Śaiva temple at Mahāsthāna, with all his followers, as the latter had insulted the royal priest. Bent upon revenge, Dharmagiri approached Vāyādumba the lord of Mlechchhas, and induced him to attack Vikramapura. When Vallāla went to fight he took a couple of pigeons with him. He told the queens and other members of his family that the return of the pigeons without him would imply his defeat and death, and then they should save their honour by throwing themselves into fire. In the fiercely contested battle that followed, Vallāla gained a complete victory and the Mlechchha army was routed. But unfortunately the pigeons flew away from the cage, and the queens, on seeing them return without the king, threw themselves into fire. As soon as the king saw the cage empty, he hastened towards his capital Rāmapāla, but he was too late. Unable to bear the misery Vallāla also jumped into the fire."

Now, such a story cannot be true of Vallālasena, as the Muslims never approached Vikramapura or Rāmapāla during his reign. So it has been taken to refer to Vallālasena II, who is mentioned as having ruled in 1312 A.D. in a text called *Viprakalpa-latikā*. But the account, specially the date and genealogy, contained in this book can hardly be relied upon. Dr. James Buchanan heard the story

[1] *Ain. Transl.* II. 146. [2] *Tar.* p. 252, 255, 256.

[3] Chs. XXVI-XXVII. These two chapters are described as '*khila*' or supplement to *Vallāla-charita*.

in 1809, but it referred not to Vallālasena, but to Susena, the last king of the Sena dynasty. In any case, it is difficult to derive any historical conclusion from stories of this kind.[1] It is not necessary to refer to similar other stories preserved in old Bengali works.

[1] For a fuller account of these stories and their different versions, cf. *Ḍhākār Itihāsa*, II. 438 ff.

APPENDIX V

THE CAPITAL OF THE SENA KINGS

Like the Pālas, the Sena kings also seem to have several capitals in Bengal.[1] The most important of them seems to have been Vikramapura near Dacca in East Bengal. Apart from traditions, associating local ruins with Vallālasena, it is a noteworthy fact that the two known Grants of Vijayasena and Vallālasena, and all the five Grants of Lakshmaṇasena dated within the first six years of his reign, were issued from the royal camp at Vikramapura. It was again in this city that the chief queen of Vijayasena performed the elaborate *Tulāpurusha Mahādāna.*[2] As Mr. N. G. Majumdar justly pointed out, it proves that Vikramapura cannot be regarded as a temporary camp, but Vijayasena had something like a permanent residence there.[3]

It is to be noted, however, that the two later Grants of Lakshmaṇasena, and those of his successors, are issued, not from Vikramapura, but respectively from Dhāryagrāma and Phalgugrāma, none of which can be identified. Whether it is merely accidental, or indicates a definite abandonment of Vikramapura as the capital, it is difficult to say. At present an extensive area in the Munshiganj sub-division (Dacca district) is known as Vikramapura. A village called Vikramapura is mentioned in old records, but it has completely disappeared.

Gauḍa was another capital city at least from the time of Lakshmaṇasena. As already noted above, it was probably named Lakshmaṇāvatī after Lakshmaṇasena, in imitation of Rāmāvatī founded by Rāmapāla. The Muslims fixed their capital in this city.

Nadiyā is described in *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī* as another city of royal residence, during the reign of Lakshmaṇasena.[4] Mr. R. D. Banerji very emphatically maintained, as one of the grounds of discrediting the accounts of *Tabaqāt,* that there was no evidence that Nadiyā was ever the capital of the Sena kings.[5] But Nadiyā is referred to as one of the capitals of the Sena kings in the genealogical treatises (*kulajis*) in Bengal.[6] It is true that these

[1] *Vallāla-charita,* ch. I. vv. 9-10. [2] Barrackpur CP. (*IB.* 63). [3] *IB.* 60. [4] *Nasiri*-transl. p. 554. [5] *BI.* 357.

[6] According to some genealogical accounts, Navadvīpa was the capital of Vallālasena in his old age (*Sambandha-nirṇaya* by Lalmohan Bhattacharya, 3rd edition, p. 708). Cf. also *Vallāla-charita,* ch. XXVII, second part, v. I. (p. 122).

accounts cannot be regarded as of great historical value unless corroborated by other evidence, but the *Tabaqāt* seems to confirm their statement. In the *Pavanadūta* of Dhoyī, Vijayapura on the Ganges is referred to as the capital of Lakshmaṇasena. Mr. M. Chakravarti identifies it with Nadiyā,[1] which agrees well with the directions contained in the poem. Mr. R. P. Chanda identifies it with Vijayanagar, about 10 miles to the west of Rampur-Boalia, the headquarters of the Rajshahi district.[2] But as Vijayapura is mentioned immediately after the description of Triveṇī-saṅgama and there is no reference to the crossing of the river, its identification with Nadiyā appears to be preferable.[3]

[1] *JASB.* N.S. I. 45. [2] *GR.* 75.

[3] A place called Vijayanagara (also written as Vijayānagara) is referred to in mediaeval Bengali works such as *Goraksha-vijaya* (pp. 39, 101, 130), *Mīna-chetana* (p. 8), and *Padma-purāṇa* (p. 437). It was not far from the Dāmodar river and to the north of it (*Gopīchānder Gāna*, edited by Dr. D. C. Sen, Vol. II, p. 428). The identity of Vijayanagara and Vijayapura may be presumed, but cannot be definitely proved.

CHAPTER IX

MINOR RULING DYNASTIES DURING THE SENA PERIOD

I. The Deva Dynasty

A LINE of kings belonging to the Deva family is known to us from three copper-plate grants.[1] Grants Nos. I and II introduce us to a dynasty whose genealogical list is given below:

I. Purushottama
|
II. Madhumathana-deva[2]
|
III. Vāsudeva
|
IV. Dāmodara-deva.

The family is said to have descended from the moon and was follower of the Vaishṇava cult. The founder of the family, Purushottama, is described as the chief of the Deva family (*Dev-ānvaya-grāmaṇī*) in Grant No. I. Neither Grant gives any royal title to him, and it may be assumed that the kingdom was founded by his son Madhumathana-deva who is referred to as a king. No details are given either of him or of his son Vāsudeva. Vāsudeva's son Dāmodara, during whose reign both the Grants were issued, ascended the throne in 1153 Śaka or 1231 A.D.,[3] and ruled till at least 1243 A.D. when the Grant No. II was issued. It may thus be assumed that Madhumathana-deva, the grandfather of Dāmodara, set up as an independent king shortly before or after the Muslim raid on Nadiyā.

[1] I. Mehār CP. of Dāmodara-deva, dated 1156 Śaka. It has not yet been published, but Dr. B. M. Barua, who is going to edit it along with Mr. P. B. Chakravarti, kindly sent me an advance-copy of his 'Introduction.'
II. Chittagong CP. of Dāmodara, dated Śaka 1165 (*IB.* 158 ff.).
III. Ādāvāḍi CP. of Daśaratha-deva. [*IB.* 181; *Bhāratavarsha*, Pausha, 1332 (B.S.), pp. 78-81.] As the plate is badly corroded, its contents are but imperfectly known.

[2] This is the reading of Grant No. I. In Grant No. II the name is given as Madhusūdana. But as the original Grant is missing, and we have to depend upon an artificially prepared facsimile (*IB.* 158), the reading of Grant No. I may be accepted.

[3] Grant No. I was issued in 1156 Śaka, in the fourth year of his reign.

So far as we can judge from the probable identification of localities mentioned in Grants Nos. I and II, Dāmodara's kingdom roughly comprised the territory corresponding to the modern districts of Tippera, Noakhali and Chittagong. Dāmodara seems to have been a powerful ruler. He is described as the suzerain of kings (*sakala-bhūpati-chakravartī*), and assumed, in imitation of the Sena kings, the high-sounding epithet *Arirāja-Chānūra-Mādhava*. It is not improbable that he took advantage of the decline of the Sena power, after the death of Viśvarūpasena, to extend his dominions. Whether the area of his kingdom, indicated above, represents the kingdom inherited by him or also includes the territories added in his reign, is difficult to say. But in view of the existence of the kingdom of Paṭṭikerā, down at least to A.D. 1220, a portion of the district of Tippera must have been outside the jurisdiction of the family till that date.

The name of the successor of Dāmodara-deva or the history of the family immediately after him is not known to us. But the name of another king of a Deva family occurs in Grant No. III.

The copper-plate, recording the Grant, is in a very damaged condition, and it has not yet been possible to decipher it in full. We have, therefore, to depend upon the meagre information contained in those parts which have been satisfactorily read.

The king issuing the grant is called *Parameśvara, Paramabhaṭṭāraka, Mahārājādhirāja, Arirāja-Danuja-Mādhava*, the illustrious Daśaratha-deva. He is also given other high-sounding titles which are all faithfully copied from the records of Viśvarūpasena and Keśavasena. Further, corresponding to the expression *Sena-kula-kamala-vikāśa-bhāskara* of the records of the two Sena kings, Daśaratha is called *Dev-ānvaya-kamala-vikāśa-bhāskara*. It would thus follow that Daśaratha belonged to the Deva family and was a Vaishṇava. As the Grant was issued from Vikramapura, and the lands granted were also situated near it, there is no doubt that Daśaratha came into possession of the Sena kingdom in East Bengal. We are further told that Daśaratha obtained the kingdom of Gauḍa through the grace of Nārāyaṇa. What is exactly meant by Gauḍa is difficult to say. The Gauḍa proper, *i.e.* North and West Bengal, was in possession of the Muslim rulers, and there is no evidence to show that the name was used at this time in an extended sense so as to cover Eastern Bengal. It is, therefore, to be presumed that Daśaratha claims to have conquered a portion of West or North Bengal. This claim need not be regarded as a fantastic one, for it is quite likely that an enterprising Hindu ruler of Eastern Bengal occasionally led successful raids to the Muslim domains in his neighbourhood.

The close agreement in the titles shows that Daśaratha was not probably far removed from the time of Keśavasena. This is in full agreement with the palaeography of the record. It is, therefore, reasonable to hold that the Deva family, to which he belonged, is identical with that mentioned in the records of Dāmodara. As the latter ruled till at least 1243 A.D., Daśaratha-deva might have been his immediate or a later successor. If Minhāj is to be believed, the descendants of Lakshmaṇasena were ruling in Bang or East Bengal till 1245 or 1260 A.D., and we have to presume that Daśaratha-deva conquered Vikramapura after that date.

The title *Arirāja-Danuja-Mādhava* borne by Daśaratha makes it very probable that he is identical with king Danujamādhava, mentioned in the genealogical records of Bengal, and also with Danuj Rāi, the Rājā of Sonārgāon, near Dacca, who, according to Ziauddin Barni, entered into an agreement with Ghiyāsuddin Balban that he would guard against the escape of the rebellious Tughril Khan by water (1283 A.D.).[1] The date 1283 A.D. would not be unsuitable for Daśaratha, though in that case we have to presume the existence of one or more kings between him and Dāmodara. If we accept the identity, we have to regard Sonārgāon as the capital of Daśaratha. It is probable, in that case, that Sonārgāon represents the capital city of Vikramapura mentioned in the records of the Senas. As is well known, the name Vikramapura is now applied to a wide area round about the modern town of Munshiganj in the Dacca district, and the designation originated from a village called Vikramapura, which undoubtedly existed in the neighbourhood of Munshiganj, though its exact location is not known at present. Sonārgāon is situated on the bank of the Dhaleswari just opposite Munshiganj, close to the confluence of that river with the Lakhia, the old Brahmaputra and the Meghnā. Sonārgāon thus occupied a strategic position, and although it is separated today by a river from the localities chiefly associated with the traditions of the Sena kings, the known changes in the courses of rivers in that region do not make it at all unlikely that in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries A.D., it was contiguous to the Munshiganj and Rāmpāl area. In any event, if we accept the identity of Daśaratha, whose capital was Vikramapura, with Danuj Rāi, whose seat of government was Sonārgāon, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the ruins of Sonārgāon represent at least a part of the famous capital of Bengal.

[1] *IB.* 182.

Two copper-plates (I and II)[1] discovered at Bhāṭerā, about twenty miles from Sylhet, introduce us to a line of kings who may be represented by the following genealogical table:

In the family of the Moon

I. Kharavāṇa (Navagīrvvāṇa)[2] (not mentioned in II).
|
II. Gokula-deva (Gokulabhūmipāla in II).
|
III. Nārāyaṇa (Nārāyaṇa-deva in II).
|
IV. Keśava-deva (Keśava-deva-deva in II, *alias* Ripu-rāja-gopī-Govinda, Donor of I).
|
V. Īśāna-deva (Donor of II; not mentioned in I).

Keśavadeva is described as a great warrior who performed *Tulāpurusha* sacrifice.

The second Grant was issued in year 17, evidently the regnal year of Īśānadeva. As to the date of first plate, opinions differ regarding the correct reading of the figures.[3] But on palaeographical grounds the plates can hardly be regarded as earlier than the 13th century A.D., and may be even somewhat later.

[1] Edited by Dr. R. L. Mitra in *Proc. ASB.* 1880, pp. 141 ff. No. I was re-edited by Dr. K. M. Gupta (*EI.* XIX. 277 ff).

[2] Dr. Mitra remarks, "The words *Navagīrvāṇa* and *Kharavāṇa* are so placed that either of them may pass for a proper name, or both of them may be epithets" (*op. cit.* 145 f.n.). Dr. Gupta takes *Kharavāṇa* as proper name and reads the other word as '*na (ra)-gīrvvāṇa*.'

[3] Dr. R. L. Mitra observes as follows: "The date of the record has been read by Paṇḍit Śrīnivāsa Śāstrī to be the year 2928 of the era of the first Pāṇḍava king: *Pāṇḍavakulādipālābda saṁ 2928.* But in the original the first figure is very unlike the third, and has been moreover scratched over and is abundantly doubtful. The second is also open to question. I am disposed to take the first for a 4 and the second for 3, which would make the date 4328=A.D. 1245" (*op. cit.*).

Dr. K. M. Gupta (*op. cit.*) read the date as 4151 (=1049 A.D.). So far as can be judged from the facsimile of the plate, the reading of both Dr. Mitra and Dr. Gupta must be regarded as conjectural, as none of the figures is clearly legible. But the palaeography of the inscription is decidedly against the view of Dr. Gupta.

According to tradition, the *ṭilā* (mound), where the plate was found, is the place which belonged to Rājā Gauragovinda *alias* Govinda Siṁha. The prince was overthrown by Shah Jellal who invaded Sylhet in 1257 A.D., and brought some of the independent Rājās under his control.

Dr. R. L. Mitra held that the Govinda of the *ṭilā* is the same with that of the record (No. IV), and the date proposed by him fits in well with the story of Shah Jellal's invasion.

The names of all the kings of the dynasty, excepting the doubtful No. I, end in *-deva*, and in Plate II we have Keśavadeva-deva. It is not impossible, therefore, that they also belong to the Deva family.

II. The Kingdom of Paṭṭikerā

The existence of the small principality of Paṭṭikerā, in the district of Tippera, may be traced as far back as the 11th century A.D. The earliest reference to it occurs in a manuscript of *Ashṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* preserved in the library of the Cambridge University. This MS. (Add. 1643), copied in the year 1015 A.D., contains the picture of a sixteen-armed goddess with the label "*Paṭṭikere Chundāvarabhavane Chundā.*"[1] It proves that early in the 11th century A.D., the image of the Buddhist goddess Chundā in Paṭṭikerā was widely known.

The Burmese chronicles contain many references to this kingdom.[2] According to *Hmannan*, the kingdom of Anoratha (1044-1077 A.D.) was bounded on the west by Patikkara, the country of Kalas (foreigners). The same text narrates the romantic story of the prince of Patikkara whose love for Shweinthi, the daughter of king Kyanzittha (1084-1112 A.D.), cost him his life. It forms the theme of Burmese poems and two melodramas, one of which runs up to three volumes, and is acted on the Burmese stage even up to the present day. Although Shweinthi's love for the prince of Patikkara had to be sacrificed to the welfare of the state, her son Alaungsithu married a princess of Patikkara. According to Burmese chronicles, Narathu, the son and successor of Alaungsithu, slew with his own hand this princess of Patikkara, the widow of his father. The Arakanese chronicles, however, give a different version of this incident. We are told that 'a certain king Pateikkara of the kingdom of Marawa' sent his two daughters as presents to the kings respectively of Arakan and Tampadipa. The general of Arakan sent the latter princess to Pagan with a request to king Narathu to send her to Tampadipa. Narathu, however, forcibly detained her in his seraglio. The princess having rebuked Narathu for his disgraceful conduct, the latter forthwith drew his sword and killed her.

[1] Foucher-*Icon.* p. 199, pl. VIII. 4.

[2] The references in Burmese chronicles are summed up in *AS.—Burma*, 1921-22, pp. 61-62; 1922-23, pp. 31-32; cf. also Phayre, *History of Burma*, pp. 49-50, from which the account of Narathu is quoted.

Both the Burmese and the Arakanese chronicles agree about the sequel to the story. The king of Patikkara,

"on hearing of the murder of his daughter, disguised as Brahmans eight soldiers who were sworn to avenge the crime. They arrived at Pagan, and were introduced into the palace under pretence of blessing the king. They killed him with a sword, after which they either killed each other or committed suicide, so that all died in the palace."[1]

How far the above stories may be regarded as historical it is difficult to say. But it is evident that there was an intimate intercourse between the kingdoms of Burma and Paṭṭikerā during the twelfth century A.D. The existence of the kingdom of Paṭṭikerā in the thirteenth century is proved by an inscription engraved on a copper-plate found in the neighbourhood of Comilla.[2] It records a grant of land in favour of a Buddhist monastery built in the city of Paṭṭikerā, by Raṇavaṅkamalla Śrī-Harikāladeva in A.D. 1220, in the 17th year of his reign. There is no doubt that this Paṭṭikerā was the capital of the kingdom which has been referred to in the Burmese chronicles as Patikkara or Pateikkara. Although the city of Paṭṭikerā cannot be identified, it must have been situated within the district of Tippera, for an important *parganā* of this district which extends up to the Maināmatī Hills, five miles to the west of Comilla, is still known as Pāṭikārā or Pāiṭkārā. In older documents this *parganā* is called Pāṭikerā or Pāiṭkerā, which more closely resembles the old name.

It is difficult to ascertain the status of this kingdom during the 11th and 12th centuries A.D. *vis-à-vis* the Pāla and Sena kings of Bengal. The references in the Burmese chronicles imply, but do not certainly prove, that it was an independent state. Harikāladeva Raṇavaṅkamalla, who ascended the throne in 1204 A.D. and was ruling till 1220 A.D., was undoubtedly an independent king. As we have seen above, the founder of another royal line, the Deva family, also set up an independent kingdom about the same time in the immediate neighbourhood. Both of them might have taken advantage of the decline of the Senas to establish their independence. The name-ending *-deva* in Harikāladeva tempts us to regard this king also as belonging to the same Deva family, though *Deva,* in this case, might be nothing more than the usual honorific ending of a royal name. The existence of at least three ruling families in the 13th century A.D., with name-endings *-deva,* two of whom are definitely said to belong to the Deva family, is, however, not

[1] For a similar story about Gauḍa, see *supra* p. 84.

[2] Maināmatī CP. (*IHQ.* IX. pp. 282 ff.)

without significance. It is probable that they were all important feudatory chiefs and attained to high position after the collapse of the Sena power.

Whether Raṇavaṅkamalla belonged to the old royal family of Paṭṭikerā referred to in the Burmese chronicles cannot be determined with any degree of certainty. In any case, we do not hear of the kingdom of Paṭṭikerā after him. It was most probably absorbed in the growing kingdom of the Deva family.

III. THE KINGDOM OF PĪṬHĪ

A family of kings with names ending in *-sena* are known to have ruled over a kingdom called Pīṭhī. An inscription found at Jānibighā,[1] about six miles to the east of Bodh-Gayā, records the grant of a village to the Vajrāsana (*i.e.* Mahābodhi temple) by king Āchārya Jayasena, lord of Pīṭhī, and son of Buddhasena. The latter must be identified with Āchārya Buddhasena, lord of Pīṭhī, who is mentioned in an inscription found at Bodh-Gayā as having issued some directions to the inhabitants of Mahābodhi in respect of some grant made to Śrī-Dharmarakshita, the religious preceptor of Aśokachalla, king of Kamā.[2]

The two inscriptions leave no doubt that the kingdom of Pīṭhī, over which Buddhasena ruled, certainly comprised the Gayā district.[3] As already noted above, Bhīmayaśas, one of the feudal chiefs who helped Rāmapāla in his expedition against Bhīma, is called in *Rāmacharita*[4] both *Pīṭhī-pati*, lord of Pīṭhī, and *Magadh-ādhipati*, suzerain of Magadha. From this Mr. K. P. Jayaswal,[5] and following him Mr. N. G. Majumdar,[6] held that Pīṭhī and Magadha are practically identical. This does not, however, follow from the statement in *Rāmacharita* which merely implies that Bhīmayaśas, lord of Pīṭhī, was also overlord of Magadha. On the whole, all

[1] Edited by H. Panday, *JBORS.* IV. 273 ff; commented on by Jayaswal, *ibid.* 266 ff; re-edited by N. G. Majumdar, *IA.* XLVIII (1919), 43 ff.

[2] This is the interpretation of N. G. Majumdar (*op. cit.* 44-46).

[3] Panday pointed out that the village Jānibighā must have been included in the dominions of Jayasena. Buddhasena's Ins. at Bodh-Gayā, containing an order to the people of Gayā, also confirms the view.

Mr. S. S. Majumdar has discussed at length the identification of Pīṭhī, and does not agree that it included the Gayā district. He locates Pīṭhī in the region lying between the modern railway stations Colgong and Sakrigali Junction on E. I. Ry. Loop line, and identifies it with Pīrpainti (*IC.* v. 379 ff.).

[4] Commentary to v. 5, Ch. II.

[5] Mr. Jayaswal writes (*op. cit.* p. 267): "There cannot be any doubt that in the early Sena times Pīṭhī denoted the whole of the province of Bihar (except Mithilā)."

[6] *Op. cit.* p. 44.

that we can definitely assert is that Pīṭhī included the region round Gayā.

The date of the two Sena kings of Pīṭhī is not free from doubts. The Jānibighā inscription is dated in the year 83 of '*Lakshmaṇa-senasy-ātītarājya.*' The true meaning of this expression has been discussed above (see *supra* p. 234). The most reasonable view seems to be that the year is to be counted from the end of Lakshmaṇasena's rule in the Gayā region *i.e.* about 1200 A.D., and hence Jayasena's reign falls in *c.* 1283 A.D.[1]

There is no evidence in support of Mr. Jayaswal's view that Buddhasena and Jayasena were scions of the great Sena family in Bengal.[2] He identified Buddhasena with the king of that name mentioned by Tāranātha along with three other Sena kings, as noted above.[3] The fact that Tāranātha refers to them as minor kings, subordinate to the Turushkas, shows that their reigns must be placed later than 1200 A.D. As such Buddhasena of his list might not improbably be the Pīṭhī king of that name. For though the name of the successor of Buddhasena of Tāranātha's list is different from Jayasena, such errors occur even in Tāranātha's account of the Pāla kings where we have no doubt that names like Gopāla, Devapāla and Dharmapāla were really historical. But even if we accept the identification, which is at best doubtful, there is nothing to support the contention that Buddhasena and Jayasena of Pīṭhī were related in any way to the Senas of Bengal,[4] though this can not be regarded as altogether beyond the bounds of probability.[5]

A special importance has been added to the history of this petty dynasty of Pīṭhī chiefs on account of the theory propounded by Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri that the well-known era *La saṁ*, starting in 1119 A.D., was founded by king Lakshmaṇasena, the founder of

[1] See *supra* pp. 235-236.

[2] *JBORS.* IV. 266.

[3] See *supra* p. 250.

[4] This view is also maintained by Mr. N. G. Majumdar (*op. cit.* p. 46).

[5] The Gayā inscription, dated 1813 of the Nirvāṇa Era, records the construction or restoration of a temple at Gayā by Purushottamasiṁha, chief of Kamā (Kumaon), and reference is made to the permission or help he received from his overlord king Aśokachalla and 'here from the Indra-like Chhinda King.' It has been suggested that the allusion, in the latter case, is to king Buddhasena in whose kingdom Bodh-Gayā was situated. If this view be accepted, we have to regard Buddhasena and his son Jayasena as belonging to the Chhinda family. This view is held by Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar (*IA.* 1913, p. 84) and N. G. Majumdar (*op. cit.* p. 46). The Chhinda family is known from two other records, but they belong to an earlier date (*IA.* 1881, p. 345; 1880, pp. 143-144). It appears from one of these records that the Chhindas were ruling in Gayā region as early as the 10th or 11th century A.D.

the royal house of Pīṭhī, to which Buddhasena and Jayasena belonged. This view has been already discussed,[1] and does not appear to be a very probable one.

IV. The Minor Gupta Dynasty

The Panchobh copper-plate of Saṁgrāma-Gupta[2] introduces us to a line of kings which is represented by the following genealogical tree:

I. Yajñeśa-Gupta
|
II. Dāmodara-Gupta
|
III. Deva-Gupta
|
IV. Rājāditya-Gupta
|
V. Kṛishṇa-Gupta
|
VI. Saṁgrāma-Gupta

Nos. I-III are simply referred to as kings. No. VI, the donor, is called *paramabhaṭṭāraka, mahārājādhirāja, parameśvara,* as well as *mahāmāṇḍalika.* He is said to be the son of the illustrious prince Kṛishṇa-Gupta, meditating on the feet of Rājāditya-Gupta, who is given the same title as Saṁgrāma-Gupta. Both are described as *parama-māheśvara-vṛishabhadhvaja-Somānvayaj-Ārjuna-vaṁśodbhava Jayapura-parameśvara.* In other words these kings were Śaivas, had bull as their insignia or emblem, claimed descent from Arjuna of lunar family, and were lords of Jayapura. This line of rulers, we are told, became reputed as Gupta (*vaṁśo Gupta°*).

The inscription may be referred on palaeographical grounds to the 12th century A.D., its characters resembling those of the grants of Lakshmaṇasena of Bengal.

Jayapura, the seat of the family, has been identified with modern Jaynagar near Lakhisarai in the Monghyr district.

The use of the title *Mahāmāṇḍalika* along with the imperial titles in the case of Nos. IV and VI indicates that the family had

[1] See *supra* pp. 234-236.

[2] The copper-plate was found, while digging earth, by one Amiri Chaudhuri about two and a half miles from Panchobh, situated about five or six miles to the west of Laheria Sarai, the chief town of the Darbhanga district in Bihar. It was edited in *JBORS.* v. 582 ff.

at first been feudatories (of the Pālas or Senas or of both) and assumed independence after the defeat of Lakshmaṇasena by Muhammad Bakhtyār Khilji.

The mention of the word *Gupta-vaṁśa* indicates that perhaps the dynasty claimed descent from the Imperial or Later Guptas.

It is interesting to note that the grandfather of the Brāhmaṇa to whom Saṁgrāma-Gupta granted land was an immigrant from Kolāñcha.

CHAPTER X

ADMINISTRATION

I. Pre-Gupta Period

We have no source of information regarding the political theory and the administrative system that prevailed in Bengal before it became a part of the Gupta empire. It is probable that in these respects it followed, in a general way, the gradual evolution that took place in the rest of Northern India, with such modifications as were required by local conditions and suited the genius of the people.

Only a few isolated facts may be gleaned from a study of the classical accounts and scattered references in Indian literature. That monarchy was the prevailing system of government is proved by the existence of various kingdoms noted above in Chapters II and III. The reference to tribal units like the Suhmas, Puṇḍras, *etc.* seems to indicate that this monarchical system was evolved out of the primitive tribal organisations. Perhaps in this respect we have a close parallel to the evolution that took place in Northern India between the age of the *Ṛik-saṁhitā* and that of the later *Saṁhitās* and the *Brāhmaṇas.*

The somewhat detailed account of the kingdom of the Gangaridai, furnished by the classical writers (*v. supra* pp. 41-43), proves that the necessity of settled forms of government was realised, and powerful monarchies were established in Bengal long before the fourth century B.C. The strength and efficiency of the military force of the Gangaridai necessarily indicate a highly developed form of state-organisation. An advanced stage in the general political consciousness and state-craft may also be inferred from the references in the epics to the political alliance of petty states against a common enemy, the occasional establishment of a strong monarchy by the combination of a number of smaller kingdoms, and the diplomatic relations maintained by kings of Bengal with foreign potentates (*v. supra* p. 38). If the legends about prince Vijaya[1] have any historical background, we may legitimately infer that in spite of the strength of the king based

[1] For the legend cf. *Mahāvaṁsa,* tr. by W. Geiger, p. 53. See also *supra* p. 39 and *infra* Ch. XVII.

on a powerful military force, the popular opinion played an important part in the system of administration, such as we could normally expect in a state arising out of tribal organisation, which was necessarily somewhat democratic in character.

We have no definite or detailed knowledge of the system of administration in Bengal during the Maurya period. We do not even know whether it formed a viceroyalty, or was directly administered by the emperor. The reference to a *mahāmātra* in the Mahāsthān inscription,[1] the single epigraphic record that we possess of the period, seems to indicate that both in theory and in practice the government in Bengal partook of the general character of the Maurya administration of which we possess an abundant knowledge from various sources. The inscription records some beneficent activities of the ruling power and indicates a concern for the good government and welfare of the people which is so characteristic of the Maurya emperors, particularly Aśoka. The inscription records the grant of paddy, and probably also of money, to the people, by way of loan, in order to relieve the distress caused apparently by famine. The clear indication therein of the Government store-house (*koṭhāgāle*) being provided with grains for the relief of the people during flood or famine finds its support from instruction laid down in the *Arthaśāstra* (II. xv) to the effect that the Government store-keeper (*koshṭhāgārādhyaksha*) shall keep apart one-half of the stores of agricultural products for meeting such emergencies.

II. Period of Gupta Imperialism

The epigraphic records of the Gupta period enable us for the first time to draw an outline of the general framework of administration. The Gupta emperors did not directly administer the whole of the territory in Bengal which was formally included within the empire. There were feudal chiefs, referred to as *Mahāsāmanta,* who even assumed the title *mahārāja.* These were probably the chiefs of what were formerly independent states. Reference may be made to the cases of *Mahāsāmanta* Śaśāṅka discussed above (*supra* p. 59) and of *Mahārāja Mahāsāmanta* Vijayasena and *Mahārāja* Rudradatta mentioned in the record of Vainyagupta.[2] The epithets applied to Vijayasena show that important state-functions were entrusted to some of these feudatory chiefs. Of these epithets *Dūtaka, Mahāpratīhāra* and *Mahāpīlupati* are met with in other

[1] *EI.* XXI. 83. Dr. Barua, however, rejects this reading (*IHQ.* x. 58).

[2] *Supra* pp. 49, 52.

records and their meaning will be discussed later. In addition to these, Vijayasena bears the titles *Pañchādhikaraṇoparika, Pāṭyuparika* and *Purapāloparika*. Uparika here evidently refers to a superior officer exercising authority over subordinate officials, who were in this case those of the five *adhikaraṇas*, *pāṭis*, and *purapālas*. The first probably refers to five district officers and the last the City Superintendents. The meaning of the second is obscure.

The imperial territory in Bengal directly under the administration of the emperors was organised into a series of well-defined administrative units. The biggest division was called *bhukti*, which was again sub-divided into *vishayas, maṇḍalas, vīthis* and *grāmas*, occasionally perhaps with other minor sub-divisions. The imperial records refer specifically to only one *bhukti* in Bengal named after, and presumably with its headquarters at, the ancient city of Puṇḍravardhana. The records of later periods refer to Vardhamāna-*bhukti* which probably existed even under the Imperial Guptas. The names of the different *bhuktis* and their sub-divisions, so far known, have been noted above (*v. supra* pp. 23 ff.) and need not be discussed here.

The Governor of a *bhukti* was appointed directly by the Emperor and was sometimes selected from members of the imperial family. The Governor was called simply *Uparika* in the time of Kumāragupta I, but later, in the reign of Budhagupta, the title *mahārāja* was added to it. Similarly the officer in charge of a *vishaya* was called *kumārāmātya* in the earlier and *āyuktaka* in the later period. During the period of the supremacy of the Later Guptas over North Bengal these two officials were called respectively *uparika-mahārāja* and *vishayapati*.[1]

The *bhuktis* and *vishayas* may be said to correspond roughly to the Divisions and Districts of modern Bengal. As a general rule the Governor of a *bhukti* appointed the district-officers, but in some cases the appointment seems to have been made directly by the Emperor.[2]

The *bhukti, vishaya*, and other administrative units such as *vīthi*, had each an *adhikaraṇa* (office) of its own at its respective headquarters. As our information is solely derived from inscriptions recording grant or sale of lands, the work of the *adhikaraṇas* in

[1] *Supra* pp. 40 ff where full references are given.

[2] This follows from the Baigram CP. (*EI*. XXI. 81) in which the *vishayapati* of Pañchanagarī is described as directly meditating on the feet of the Emperor (l. 1). In other cases the *vishayapati* is said to have been appointed by the Governor (cf. the land-grants of the Gupta Emperors and independent kings of Bengal referred to *supra* pp. 49 ff.). Pañchanagarī had another exceptional feature, *viz.* the absence of any Board in the district *adhikaraṇas*.

connection with such transactions alone is known to us. But there can be hardly any doubt that the description of its composition and the method of business apply also, with necessary modifications, to other kinds of work which a state has to perform. In any case a detailed study of the transactions for the sale of land gives us a glimpse of the actual working of these *adhikaraṇas* which formed a unique and very interesting feature of the organisation of local governments in ancient Bengal.

Four copper-plate inscriptions found at Dāmodarpur[1] prove that during the century 444-544 A.D. the *adhikaraṇa* of Koṭīvarsha-*vishaya,* situated in a town presumably bearing the same name, was composed, in addition to the district-officer, of four other prominent members *viz.* (1) the *nagara-śreshṭhin,* the president of the various guilds or corporations of the town or of the rich bankers; (2) the *prathama-sārthavāha* (the chief merchant) representing the various trading associations and other mercantile professions of the *vishaya;* (3) the *prathama-kulika* (the chief artisan) representing the craft-guilds; and (4) the *prathama-kāyastha* (the chief or senior scribe) either representing the Kāyasthas as a class, or acting as a state-official in the capacity of a Secretary of modern days.[2] It will not be out of place here to note that the discovery by Bloch of a large number of seals[3] at Basārh (old Vaiśālī) in North Bihar (Tīrabhukti) with the legend *śreshṭhi-sārthavāha-kulika-nigama i.e.* the corporations of bankers, merchants and artisans, and of some others by Spooner there with separate legends such as *śreshṭhi-nigama*[4] (with which may also be compared the legend *kulika-nigama* in some of Marshall's finds at Bhiṭā in Allahabad district),[5] corroborates the view that similiar corporations existed in the headquarters of Koṭīvarsha in North Bengal, and that it is their representatives who served in the *adhikaraṇa* of the *vishayapati.*

According to the four inscriptions, referred to above, the intending purchasers of land approached the *adhikaraṇa* and stated the nature and amount of land required by them, the purpose for which it was to be used, and their readiness to pay the price

[1] *EI.* xv. 130 ff.

[2] The exact meaning of the four designations is difficult to determine. Dr. U. N. Ghoshal interpreted them as 'guild-president, the leading merchant, the leading banker and the leading scribe' (*Hindu Revenue System,* p. 202). On the other hand Dr. Bloch took *śreshṭhin, sārthavāha,* and *kulika* respectively as banker, trader, and merchant (*ASI.* 1903-4, p. 104).

[3] *ASI.* 1903-4, pp. 101-20.

[4] *ASI.* 1913-14, pp. 125, 137, 150, 153.

[5] *ASI.* 1911-12, p. 56.

prescribed by usage. The matter was referred by the *adhikaraṇa* to three record-keepers (*pustapālas*). After a favourable report had been received from them and the price actually paid, the land was formally made over to the party. The copper-plates which inform us of these transactions were the formal deeds of sale which were handed over to the purchasers as documents of their right.

The *adhikaraṇas* of the district, as described above, evidently belong to the type mentioned in the old Sanskrit drama, the *Mṛichchhakaṭika*. The famous trial-scene in the ninth Act of the drama refers to the *adhikaraṇa* or court sitting in a *maṇḍapa* or assembly-hall. The trial is conducted jointly by the *adhikaraṇika*, a *śreshṭhin* and a *kāyastha*. This drama shows that the *adhikaraṇas*, which included at least two members referred to in the Dāmodarpur Plates, served as a court of justice for the trial of criminal cases. This only supports, what has been stated above, that the *adhikaraṇa* formed a general administrative body in charge of many kinds of administrative work of the district. The sale of land could not have been its sole business, for then it would be difficult to explain why bankers, merchants and artisans should form its constituent parts.[1]

The constitution of the district *adhikaraṇas* raises several interesting problems. First, even assuming that three of the four additional members represented the trade, industry and banking corporations, we do not know whether they were nominated by the Governor or elected by their respective constituencies. The fact that each of these bodies had a *nigama* or a corporation of its own, makes it very likely that the presidents of these corporations became automatically members of the *adhikaraṇa*. But whether these presidents were elected by the associations or nominated by the king we have no definite means to determine. It appears, however, from a study of the *Dharmasūtras* by Nārada and Bṛihaspati, which belong approximately to the same period with which we are dealing, that the presidents of these associations were elected by their members.[2]

The second problem relates to the position of the additional members *vis-à-vis* the district-officer. It has been held by some that the direct responsibility for managing the affairs of the *adhikaraṇa* lay in the hands of the district-officer, but he carried out his duties in the presence of the additional members.[3] Other scholars regard the latter as a Board of Advisers[4] to the district-

1 Dr. U. N. Ghoshal, *op. cit.* pp. 200-205.
2 Cf. R. C. Majumdar, *Corporate Life in Ancient India*, Ch. I. § 6-7.
3 *IC.* VI. 161.
4 *HNI.* 56.

officer. This is certainly a more reasonable view than the former. But the word '*puroga*' used after the names and designations of the additional members would rather seem to indicate that they formed an integral part of the *adhikaraṇa* and possessed rights and prerogatives beyond those of mere advisers. Although their exact constitutional position is difficult to determine, it would not be unreasonable to assume that they held concurrent authority with the district-officer in the general administration or at least in certain specified branches of it.

This democratic principle in the administration of local affairs is also proved by another copper-plate from Dāmodarpur issued during the reign of Budhagupta.[1] It describes the sale of a piece of land, with the same formalities as noted above, including reference to a record-keeper (only one in this case), but the body which is approached by the purchaser and authorises the sale consists of *mahattaras*, the *ashṭakulādhikaraṇa*, the *grāmikas*, and the *kuṭumbins*. From Palāśavṛindaka, which was evidently its head-quarters, this body reports the sale-transactions to the chief Brāhmaṇas, the prominent subjects and householders of the village of Chaṇḍagrāma. Moreover, even after reference to the record-keeper, and a favourable report received from him, the *mahattaras*, *kuṭumbins* and others measured the land under sale and demarcated its boundary.

The procedure, here contemplated, is obviously different from that laid down in the other records. Some of the differences, such as measurement of land by the *mahattaras* and others may be explained by supposing that purely formal details were omitted in the latter. But there is no doubt that the *adhikaraṇas* of Koṭīvarsha and Palāśavṛindaka, though exercising similar functions, were differently constituted. It appears from the Dhanaidaha Grant of Kumāragupta I that an *adhikaraṇa* like that of Palāśavṛindaka was really an *adhikaraṇa* of a village or a group of villages. The difference in the constitution can be easily explained. The head-quarters of such an *adhikaraṇa* evidently had not sufficient industrial and commercial importance, and did not possess associations of bankers, traders or artisans, which were large enough in number or of sufficient importance to make their power felt in public affairs. In these rural areas, different types of men, enumerated above, exercised authority in public affairs. Of these the *mahattaras* probably denote the leading men of the locality,[2] and the *grāmikas*,

[1] *EI*. xv. 135.

[2] According to Pargiter, "the *Mahattaras* were the men of position in the villages, the leading men." He even suggests that the word *mātabbar* or

the heads of villages.[1] The method by which these two categories were selected, in what respects the former were distinguished from the *kuṭumbins* which mean householders, and the exact significance of the term *ashṭakulādhikaraṇa* are all unknown to us.[2] But although, therefore, we are unable to determine the exact composition of these rural *adhikaraṇas,* there can be hardly any doubt that they represented the popular elements and were constituted on the same democratic basis which distinguishes the district or urban *adhikaraṇas.* This predominance of popular elements in the administrative machinery is one of the most important side-lights on the system of government in ancient Bengal that archaeology has revealed. It may be presumed that the administration of other territorial units such as *vīthi*[3] and *bhukti* was also organised in the same spirit.

A *vīthi-adhikaraṇa* consisting of *mahattaras, agrahārins, khāḍgis,* and at least one *vāha-nāyaka* (superintendent of transport organisation ?) is referred to in the Mallasārul copper-plate grant of the time of Gopachandra, who founded an independent kingdom in

Mātabar, a common title for the head-man of a village in East Bengal, though generally derived from Arabic *Mu'tabar,* "trustworthy, reputable," is more probably a corruption of *Mātar-bar,* that is, *Mahattara-vara,* "the chief of the leading men" (*IA.* xxxix. 213).

[1] The status and function of the village head-man are described in detail in Smṛiti literature and are also referred to in inscriptions. For a detailed discussion cf. R. C. Majumdar, *Corporate Life,* p. 155 and Jolly, *Hindu Law and Custom,* p. 203. According to *Manu-saṁhitā* (VII. 115-120) the king appointed a head over each village, as well as heads of ten villages, heads of twenty, heads of a hundred and heads of a thousand. A head of ten villages (*Daśagrāmika*) is referred to in Bengal inscriptions, as will be noted below, but how far the organisation described by Manu was applicable to Bengal at any particular time, it is difficult to say.

[2] For the meaning of these terms cf. Dr. R. G. Basak in *AJV.* II. 491-92. According to him, *ashṭakulādhikaranas* were probably officers appointed over eight *kulas,* a technical term used to denote inhabited country, especially as much ground as can be cultivated by two ploughs each driven by six bulls. According to Dr. Basak, *kuṭumbins* undoubtedly refer to ordinary householders or family-men *i.e.,* men having *kuṭumbas,* families. He does not agree with Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar who takes *kuṭumbins* to mean only the cultivators (*IA.* 1919, p. 80). Dr. U. N. Ghoshal interprets *kuṭumbins* as heads of households (*op. cit.* p. 200, f.n. 2).

Dr. U. N. Ghoshal regards *mahattaras, kuṭumbins,* and even *prakṛitis* not as 'private individuals' but as 'officials' and 'administrative agents' (*op. cit.* p. 205). The evidence of the Khālimpur Plate, cited by him, does not support his contention. For a person concerned with administration is not necessarily an official, as, for example, we have non-official members of municipalities and district-boards, and assessors and jurors at present. For criticism of Dr. Ghoshal's view cf. *EHBP.* I. 127; *DUS.* V. No. II, pp. 1 ff.

[3] For the relation of *vīthi* to *bhukti* and *vishaya,* cf. *IC.* VI. 156.

Vaṅga immediately after the Guptas.[1] It is, therefore, very likely that such an *adhikaraṇa* existed under the Imperial Guptas also.

We have reference to an *adhikaraṇa* of the town of Puṇḍravardhana,[2] presumably the headquarters of the *bhukti* named after it. It is natural to regard it as the *adhikaraṇa* of the *bhukti*, corresponding to that of a *vishaya*, though it is not specifically referred to as such. The record says that one or more officials called *āyuktakas* and the *adhikaraṇa* of the town of Puṇḍravardhana, headed by *Ārya-nagara-śreshṭhin*, were approached by a Brāhmaṇa and his wife for purchase of land. After consulting the chief (*prathama*) record-keeper and five others, they sold the land according to usual procedure. It is clear, therefore, that the *adhikaraṇa* of Puṇḍravardhana performed the same function, in regard to sale of lands, as that of a *vishaya*. The only difference is that the Governor of the *bhukti* is not referred to at all in connection with this *adhikaraṇa*. It has been suggested that "the head of the provincial government of Puṇḍravardhana was not directly connected with his *adhikaraṇa* at least in so far as it concerned itself with transactions of land-sale."[3] This is very unlikely and we should rather suppose that either the Governor was included in the *adhikaraṇa* whose composition is only briefly referred to as '*Ārya-nagara-śreshṭhi-purogam*,' or that *Āyuktaka* refers to the Governor who, along with the other members of the *adhikaraṇa* headed by *nagara-śreshṭhin*, composed the authoritative body.[4]

The procedure of land-sale described in the Gupta records referred to above throws some light on the very important, though somewhat intriguing, problem of the ownership of land. But radically different views have been entertained on this subject. Some regard the king as the sole proprietor of lands in ancient Bengal,[5] while others look upon the whole village or individual cultivator as the real owner.[6] The procedure of land-sale in Bengal raises interesting issues in respect of each of these theories. If, for example, we hold that the land belonged to the king, it is difficult to explain why his officer could not alienate it without the approval of the people or their representatives such as the *mahattaras* and the *kuṭumbins*. On the other hand, the fact that the proceeds of sale went to the royal exchequer goes definitely against the other two

[1] See *supra* p. 52.
[2] Paharpur CP. (*EI.* XX. 59).
[3] *IC.* VI. 159-60.
[4] One of the seals (No. 20) discovered at Basārh shows that a provincial Governor had his own *adhikaraṇa* (*ASI.* 1903-4, p. 109).
[5] Dr. U. N. Ghoshal, *op. cit.* 206-7.
[6] This is the view of Dr. R. G. Basak (*AJV.* II. 486-91).

theories. We must, therefore, admit that during the Gupta period the king was undoubtedly recognised as the sole owner of the soil, at least in Bengal. At the same time indications are not wanting that perhaps in more primitive times the villagers, either individually or through their assemblies, possessed specific rights over the lands within the jurisdiction of the village. Whether such rights amounted to ownership, absolute or even modified, it is impossible to say in the present state of our knowledge.[1]

III. PERIOD OF THE INDEPENDENT VAṄGA RULERS BEFORE THE PĀLAS

The establishment of independent kingdoms in South and East Bengal in the sixth century A.D. necessarily brought about certain changes in the administrative system. But the tradition of the Gupta rule was preserved to a very large extent. The administrative divisions like *bhuktis, vishayas* and *vīthis* were continued on the old lines, but there were changes or variations in details. We have specific mention of the Vardhamāna-*bhukti* and there was probably another *bhukti* with its headquarters at Navyāvakāśikā.[2] The Governor of the latter is called *uparika,* with the additional title *mahāpratīhāra* in two earlier records, and *antaraṅga* in a later one.[3] Here, again, while the *vishayapati* or district-officer was generally appointed by the Governor, in one case he seems to have been directly appointed by the king.

The administrative organisation of the different territorial units was also modelled on the old system. We have no definite information about the *adhikaraṇas* of *bhukti* or *grāma,* but there are specific references to the *adhikaraṇas* of *vishaya* or district[4] in several records. Unfortunately their constitution is not as clearly stated as in the earlier records. Here the authoritative body, before which the intending purchasers of land present their petition, consists of the district *adhikaraṇa,* a number of *mahattaras* and *vyavahārins* (or *vyāpārins*) and occasionally also other leading

[1] Cf. *DUS.* v. No. II. pp. 1 ff.

[2] See *supra* p. 26. The area is not expressly designated as *bhukti,* but may be regarded as such as its Governor was called Uparika.

[3] In Dharmāditya's CP., dated year 3, the Governor Sthāṇudatta is simply called *mahārāja.* The CP. of Gopachandra, dated year 19, seems to apply one or more additional titles to the Governor, but this portion of the text is illegible (*IA.* 1910, pp. 195, 204). The unpublished Kurpālā CP of Samāchāradeva refers to '*Pauropakārika-vyāpārapara-mahāpratīhāra.*'

[4] The district in the Faridpur Plates is named *Vāraka-maṇḍala-vishaya.* The use of *maṇḍala* as part of the name of *vishaya* is peculiar.

citizens.[1] It has been suggested that the *mahattaras* represented the landed gentry and the *vyavahārins*, the industrial or commercial interests of the district.[2] This is plausible enough, but cannot be regarded as certain.[3] As to the *adhikaraṇa* itself, it is described as headed by '*jyeshṭha-kāyastha*' in two cases, and 'the chief *adhikaraṇika*' in another case.[4] The other members of the *adhikaraṇa* are not specified. It has been inferred from the two descriptive expressions of *adhikaraṇa* that the *vishayapati* did not control the affairs of the *adhikaraṇa*, and his functions were separated from those connected with the *adhikaraṇa*.[5] It is difficult to accept this theory, which stands on the same footing as the view upheld by the same scholar, on similar grounds, that the provincial Governor had no connection with the *adhikaraṇa* of the headquarters of the *bhukti*. But whatever might have been the actual constitution of the *adhikaraṇa* of the district of this period, its association with the leading men of the district while exercising its authority shows that the old democratic spirit in local administration was still the characteristic feature of the government. That the same spirit prevailed in the *vīthi-adhikaraṇas* of this period has already been mentioned above (*v. supra* p. 269).

We must naturally expect some changes in the central government. Here the independent kings, who took the place of the distant Gupta overlords, bore the title *mahārājādhirāja*, which was less pretentious than the Imperial Gupta titles, *parama-daivata*, *parama-bhaṭṭāraka* and *mahārājādhirāja*, but more dignified than the simple title *mahārāja* borne by old Vaṅga kings like Vainyagupta, Chandravarman, and Siṁhavarman. But the independent kings of Bengal issued commands in right Gupta style to a large number of officials. Only one such list has been preserved in the Mallasārul Plate referred to above, and the names of the officials are given in Appendix A. The list is much smaller than that in the Pāla and Sena records, and as most of the terms are obscure, it does not enable us to form an idea of the general administrative machinery beyond what has been stated above. It, however, represents the first stage in the administrative organisation which was further developed in the later periods.

[1] Dr. U. N. Ghoshal (*op. cit.* pp. 204-5) regards them all as minor officials (cf. *supra* p. 269, f.n. 2).

[2] *IC.* VI. 163.

[3] Cf. *supra* p. 269, f.n. 2.

[4] The unpublished Kurpālā CP. of Samāchāradeva refers to "*mahattarādhikaraṇam.*"

[5] *IC.* VI. 163.

IV. THE PĀLA PERIOD

The rule of the Pālas for nearly four centuries established for the first time a long and stable government in Bengal. The administrative machinery must have assumed a definite form and taken deep root in the soil during this period. Unfortunately the available materials do not enable us to give a comprehensive picture of it with sufficient clearness, and we have to content ourselves with mere glimpses into its different aspects.

The organisation of the kingdom into a series of administrative units called *bhuktis, vishayas, maṇḍalas,* and other smaller ones ending with *pāṭakas* were continued (*v. supra* p. 23). The Pālas exercised direct administrative control over Bengal, Bihar, and Assam and we find mention of Puṇḍravardhana-, Vardhamāna-, and Daṇḍa-*bhuktis* within the limitis of Bengal proper, Tīra-*bhukti* and Śrīnagara-*bhukti* in Bihar, and Prāgjyotisha-*bhukti* in Assam. The inscriptions of the period give us the names of a large number of *vishayas* and *maṇḍalas* (*v. supra* p. 24), and refer to the officers connected with their administration bearing designations identical with or very similar to those of the earlier period.[1] But they do not throw any light on the forms of local governments prevailing at the time. We do not even know for certain whether the *adhikaraṇas,* constituted on democratic basis, still formed a feature of the administrative system. These are not referred to in any record, though it is not unlikely that they survived, perhaps in a modified form.

The increased royal power was reflected in the assumption of the titles *parameśvara, parama-bhaṭṭāraka, mahārājādhirāja,* evidently on the model of the Imperial Guptas. The central administrative machinery was also developed, as the Pālas ruled over a vast empire. It is during this period that we come across for the first time an important official of the state, whose status was like that of the Prime Minister. He was probably called *mantrī* or *sachiva.*[2] The post seems to have been hereditary in the family

[1] The Khālimpur CP. (Pāla Ins. No. 2) refers to *Jyeshṭha-kāyastha, Mahāmahattara, Mahattara, and Dāśagrāmika etc.* as administrators of *vishaya* (*vishaya-vyavahāriṇaḥ*). There are also references to *Uparika, Mahā-kumārāmātya, Vishayapati, Grāmapati,* and *Brāhmaṇas, Kuṭumbins etc.* The expression *Rājasthānīya* is generally added to *Uparika* (cf. Pāla Ins., Nos. 14, 31, 46), though in one case it seems to be mentioned as a separate official (No. 6). In the former cases references are apparently to the Governor of a province who takes the place of the king *i.e.* Governor and Viceroy. The official name *Dāśagrāmika* shows that the district was divided into groups of ten villages; cf. *supra* p. 269, f.n. 1.

[2] For the use of the term *Sachiva* in this sense cf. Pāla Ins. No. 50. '*Mantrī*' is referred to in Ins. No. 31, l. 61; No. 39, l. 49.

of Brāhamaṇa Garga from the time of Dharmapāla to Nārāyaṇapāla. The great power and high pretensions of these ministers described in Bādāl Pillar inscription (No. 16) have already been noted above (*v. supra* p. 116). The statement that the minister Darbhapāṇi kept the emperor Devapāla waiting at his door may be an exaggeration, but the inscription leaves no doubt that the Prime Minister exercised very great authority in the affairs of state. Another family supplied Prime Ministers to the later Pāla kings. Yogadeva, the Prime Minister of Vigrahapāla III, is said to have succeeded to this post on hereditary principles, and members of his family held the same position up to the reign of Kumārapāla (Ins. No. 50). Vaidyadeva, the minister of the last named king, who regarded him as a dear friend, was also an able general and founded an independent kingdom in Kāmarūpa. The Pālas inherited the tradition of hereditary ministers from the Imperial Guptas. It may be said to be a characteristic feature in ancient India, and even less important offices, both in Gupta and Pāla periods, were often filled up on hereditary principles.[1]

The form of government was, of course, monarchical. The succession to the royal throne seems to have been based on strictly hereditary principles. The heir-apparent, designated as *Yuvarāja*, is frequently referred to in the records, and was probably entrusted with important functions, though we have no definite evidence of it. *Rājaputra* (royal prince) is included in the stereotyped list of officials, and as in the case of Rāmapāla, it is probable that sometimes kings in old age left the cares of government to their sons.

The establishment of a big kingdom or empire led to the creation of feudatory chiefs, who are referred to in the Pāla records as *rājan, rājanyaka, rājanaka, rāṇaka, sāmanta,* and *mahāsāmanta.* Such feudatory chiefs existed also under the older independent royal dynasties in Bengal. There are references to *sāmantas* in the records of Samāchāradeva,[2] Devakhaḍga and Jayanāga. In the last case, the *sāmanta* was a powerful chief, with a *mahāpratīhāra* ruling over a *vishaya* or district under him. When Śaśāṅka established an empire, the independent kings conquered by him became feudatory chiefs. One such ruler, called *mahārāja mahāsāmanta,* is known to us, but there were probably others. That this system was also inherited from the Gupta period is proved by

[1] Cf. R. D. Banerji, *The Age of the Imperial Guptas*, p. 93. Al Masūdi also refers to hereditary offices in India (*E. & D.* I. 20).

[2] Unpublished Kurpālā copper-plate.

what has been said above (*v. supra* pp. 56, 59). The Pāla rulers must have had many such *sāmantas* under them, in addition to the defeated kings, re-instated in their dominions, whose exact relationship with the suzerain power cannot be determined with certainty. Occasionally the Pāla kings held *Durbars* in which the feudatory chiefs and subordinate kings assembled at the capital city to render homage and obedience to the suzerain (*v. supra* p. 114).

The decline in power of the central authority naturally gave an opportunity to the feudal chiefs to assume higher prerogatives. Even where they did not openly declare themselves free, they often practically exercised independent authority. The chiefs who rallied to the cause of Rāmapāla were *de facto* sovereign rulers, even though the *Rāmacharita* calls them *sāmantas*. We possess an official record[1] of at least one such feudal chief *viz.* Īśvaraghosha of Ḍhekkarī. Although he is called *Mahāmāṇḍalika*, the grant is drawn up exactly in the style of independent kings such as those of the Pāla, Varman and Sena dynasties, and, what is most interesting, the order of the ruler is issued to a host of officials, including *rājan, rājanyaka, rājñī, rāṇaka etc.*, the list closely corresponding to what we meet with in the records of the Guptas, Pālas and Senas. There can be hardly any doubt that chiefs like Īśvaraghosha were independent rulers for all practical purposes, though they did not openly assume royal epithet. Their position was perhaps similar to the provincial rulers, like the *Viziers* of Oudh, during the last days of the Mughal rule. The designations *rājan, rājanaka, rājanyaka, rāṇaka etc.* in the stereotyped list of officials probably refer to them.

The efficiency and comprehensive character of the administrative organisation of the Pālas are best evidenced by the long list of officials given in their land-grants. Although the exact nature of the power and functions of many of them is not clearly known, the list enables us to form a general idea of the wide scope of the administrative machinery and the different departments through which it was carried on.

A list of these officials, with such information as we possess regarding their functions, is given in Appendix B and we may state here in general terms some of the prominent features of administration that may be inferred from them and other sources.

It appears that the scope of the government not only embraced the secular affairs of the kingdom—political, social and economical, but even extended to moral and religious spheres. It is said, for

[1] Rāmganj CP. of Īśvaraghosha (*IB.* 149).

example, that Dharmapāla maintained the rules of castes and religious orders in strict conformity to the holy scriptures.[1] In this respect he merely followed the old traditions, but it is particularly interesting inasmuch as the ruler was himself a follower of Buddhism. This shows that the religious profession of the ruler did not influence the policy of the state, which was based on time-honoured precepts and conventions. The appointment of a long line of Brahmans as Prime Ministers by the Buddhist Pāla kings also constitutes an important evidence to the same effect.

The fact that Devapāla appointed Vīradeva as the head of the Nālandā monastery[2] also indicates that the authority of the Pāla kings extended to the religious sphere. It has already been noted above (*v. supra* p. 115) that the Tibetan traditions ascribe the foundation of various Buddhist monasteries to Pāla kings. There is epigraphic evidence to show that they endowed both Buddhist and Brahmanical temples and religious establishments.[3]

Reference must be made in this connection to the royal agent for religious grants and endowments called *dūtaka*. This term does not denote any regular officer, but usually a high official, sometimes even the crown prince, was selected as *dūtaka* through whom request for any such grant was conveyed to the king, and later, the royal approval communicated to the officers concerned for the due execution of the charter for the grant.

We know from Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* and other sources that administration was carried on by a number of departments of the government, each organised under an *adhyaksha* or superintendent. The list of officials mentioned in the Pāla records points to a similar organisation,[4] though we are unable to define the nature and scope of the various departments into which the administration was divided. An analysis of the stereotyped list of officials,[5] however, indicates broadly the different departments of administration and their scope of activities.

I. The main powers and responsibilities of the government must have been in the hands of a central executive body acting directly

[1] Ins. No. 6, v. 5. Also cf. No. 39, v. 13.

[2] Ins. No. 8, v. 10.

[3] Ins Nos. 2, 7, 14. The last one refers to the construction of a Śiva temple by Nārāyaṇapāla.

[4] This is more definitely established by the statements in the Irdā CP. referred to *infra* pp. 282-83. The title *mahā-* prefixed to well-known official names seems to indicate the organisation, under one head, of a number of such officials.

[5] This is arranged alphabetically in App. B with short notes to which reference should be made in respect of individual officials mentioned in the text. It must be added that the interpretation of the terms is mostly conjectural.

under the supervision of the king. In addition to the *Rājaputra* and Prime Minister mentioned above, we have specific references to other ministers such as *Mahā-sāndhivigrahika,* Minister in charge of Peace and War, *Rājāmātya,* probably denoting the junior ministers in general, *Mahā-Kumārāmātya,* whose exact status is not known, and *Dūta,* the ambassador; the other high executive officials being collectively referred to as *amātyas.* An officer, called *Aṅgaraksha,* was probably the Head of the Royal Body-guard. *Rājasthānīya* probably denoted a high official under the king and possibly had the status of a Regent or a Viceroy.

A class of officers described as *adhyakshas* or supervisors of elephants, horses, colts, mules, cows, buffaloes, goats and sheep, must be distinguished from army officers in charge of some of these, referred to later.[1] They may be regarded as Superintendents of elephants, horses *etc.* maintained by the state, and their functions and duties may be similar to those of the functionaries of the same names described in the Kauṭilīya *Arthaśāstra.*[2]

II. Revenue Department. There were different classes of officers for collecting revenues from different sources. Those from agricultural lands must have been mainly collected through the heads of territorial units, such as *Uparika, Vishayapati, Dāśagrāmika* and *Grāmapati.* The exact nature of these revenues is not known to us, but they are referred to in general terms as *bhāga, bhoga, kara, hiraṇya, uparikara etc.*[3] in the land-grants. We have a specific

[1] In the Khālimpur CP. (No. 2) we have the compound '*hasty-aśva-go-mahishy-aj-āvik-ādhyaksha*' as well as *balādhyaksha* and *nākādhyaksha* (evidently a mistake for *nāvādhyaksha* or *naukādhyaksha*). In the Nālandā CP. of Dharmapāla (No. 3) we have '*hasty-aśv-oshṭra-bala-vyāpṛitaka*' as well as '*kiśora-vaḍavā-go-mahishy-adhikṛita.*' The Monghyr CP. of Devapāla (No. 6) has '*hasty-aśv-oshṭra-bala-vyāpṛitaka*' and '*kiśora-vaḍavā-go-mahishy-aj-āvik-ādhyaksha.*' With the addition of '*nau*' before '*bala*' in the first, these two expressions become stereotyped in the later Pāla Grants. It is obvious that we have to deal with two sets of officers, referred to respectively as '*vyāpṛitaka*' and either '*adhikṛita*' or '*adhyaksha.*' The use of the words '*nau*' and '*bala*' indicates the military character of the former. *Adhyaksha* should then be taken in the sense of a superintendent in the civil administration.

[2] Bk. II. Chs. XXIX-XXXI.

[3] The meaning of these terms is not definitely known, but the following suggestions may be provisionally accepted:

Bhāga=Land-revenues paid in kind.

Bhoga=Periodical supplies of fruits, firewood, flowers and the like which the villagers had to furnish to the king.

Kara=A general property tax levied periodically.

Hiraṇya=Tax in *cash* levied upon certain special kinds of crops as distinguished from the tax in *kind* (*bhāga*) which was charged upon the ordinary crops.

Uparikara=Impost levied on temporary tenants.

reference to an officer called *Shashṭh-ādhikṛita,* and it is probable that he collected the sixth part of various articles which belonged to the king according to *Manu-smṛiti.*[1] Another officer, called *Bhogapati* probably collected the tax referred to as *bhoga.* The other kinds of taxes and revenues may be inferred from the designations of officials employed to collect them. If our interpretation of these terms are correct, the following taxes were imposed during the Pāla period.

1. Tax payable by the villagers for protection against thieves and robbers.[2]
2. Customs and tolls.
3. Fine for criminal offences.[3]
4. Ferry-dues.

These taxes were collected respectively by *Chauroddharaṇika, Śaulkika, Dāśāparādhika,* and *Tarika.*

III. The Accounts (and probably also Records) Department was in charge of *Mahākshapaṭalika.* He was probably assisted by *Jyeshṭha-kāyastha.*

IV. Official names like *Kshetrapa* and *Pramātṛi* seem to refer to a department of land-survey.

V. The Judicial Department was in charge of *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka* (called *Dharmādhikāra* in Ins. No. 50).

VI. The Police Department had several officers such as *Mahā-pratīhāra, Dāṇḍika, Dāṇḍapāśika* and *Daṇḍaśakti.* The first was probably in charge of the palace, but the duties of the others cannot be defined. Another officer *Khola* was probably in charge of the Intelligence Department.

VII. The Military Department was in charge of *Senāpati* or *Mahāsenāpati.* There were separate officers under him in charge of infantry, cavalry, elephants, camels and ships which formed the chief divisions of the army.[4] The names of some special officers are also mentioned such as *Koṭṭapāla* in charge of forts, and *Prāntapāla,* the Warden of the Marches.

For discussion, with references, cf. U. N. Ghoshal, *op. cit.* pp. 34, 237, 36, 60, 210. There are, in addition, two kinds of taxes, each mentioned only in a single record, *piṇḍaka* (Ins. No. 2) and *ratnatraya-sambhoga* (No. 46) the meaning of which is unknown. Dr. Ghoshal's interpretation (*op. cit.* p. 244) of these two terms is hardly convincing.

[1] Ch. VII. v. 131.

[2] For this interpretation of *Chauroddharaṇa,* cf. Ghoshal, *op. cit.* p. 243, f.n. 2.

[3] For the different views on the interpretation of the term *daśāparādha,* cf. Ghoshal, *op. cit.* pp. 219-20.

[4] See *supra* p. 277, f.n. 1.

The Nālandā cp. of Dharmapāla (No. 3) refers to the traditional five-fold military divisions *viz.* Elephant, Cavalry, Chariot, Infantry and Navy but there is no reference to any officer in charge of Chariots.[1]

That the navy always played an important part in the military organisation of Bengal is known from various sources. Apart from the specific references in *Raghuvaṁśa* to the naval force of Bengal and the general references in foreign inscriptions to Bengal as a sea-power (*supra* p. 37, f.n. 3; p. 55, f.n. 1), ships are frequently mentioned in the inscriptions of Bengal, and there is probably also a reference to a ship-building harbour in an inscription of Dharmāditya (*supra* p. 51). We have also references to naval fights in south Vaṅga during the reign of Kumārapāla (*supra* p. 168) and a naval expedition to the west sent by Vijayasena (*supra* pp. 214-15).

The elephant forces of Bengal are also frequently mentioned in many inscriptions, and their effective strength is indirectly admitted even in the records of many foreign foes which refer to their formidable array in glowing terms.

As regards cavalry, we learn from inscription No. 6 that horses were imported from Kāmboja, which has always been noted for horses of good breed.

The mention in the Pāla records of a number of tribal names along with the officials may be taken as referring to the military units recruited from those tribes.[2] These are *Gauḍa, Mālava, Khaśa, Kulika* and *Hūṇa* in the Nālandā cp. of Dharmapāla (No. 3). *Karṇāṭa* and *Lāṭa* are added in the records of subsequent kings, while *Choḍa* occurs in a single inscription (No. 46) of the time of Madanapāla, the last Pāla king.[3] The fact that there is no reference to these tribes in the Khālimpur cp. of Dharmapāla, might lead one to presume that this military organisation was not fully developed till towards the close of his reign. The name *Gauḍa* in the list is certainly very interesting and possibly refers to the soldiers recruited in the home territory of the Pālas. *Kulika* cannot be obviously taken as an artisan or merchant and must be regarded as the name of a people.[4] The other tribes are well-known. It is obvious from this list that the Pāla kings recruited mercenary soldiers from all parts of India.

[1] For illustrations of chariots and armed warriors, cf. *Paharpur*, pl. LVII.

[2] The words *chāṭa-bhāṭa* which follow these tribal names mean regular and irregular troops (*CII.* III. 98).

[3] The addition of *Oḍra* to this list (*EHBP.* I. 142) is due to the misreading of *Gauḍa* as *Odra*(*ḍra*) in *EI.* XVII. 321.

[4] '*Kulika*' occurs in the list of peoples and countries in *Brahma Purāṇa*. It is placed in the Northern Division along with Gāndhāras, Yavanas, Kāmbojas, Kāśmīras and Lampakas (Ch. XXVII, vv. 45-50).

Very little is definitely known about the plannings of campaigns or method of warfare. But the reference to officers like *Mahā-vyūhapati* in later records seems to indicate that formation of *vyūhas* or different types of battle-arrays, such as are mentioned in Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*, still formed an important part in military strategy. If we could believe in the poetic descriptions in inscriptions, we might conclude that marches of each element in dense formations were the general rule in military movements.

The list of officials contained in the Pāla records contains many names other than those referred to above. But in the absence of definite knowledge about their meaning we cannot say whether the officials belonged to any of the Departments noted above or to new Departments which are yet unknown to us. For example, *Khaṇḍa-raksha* might have been in charge of a Department of construction of buildings and their repairs.

v. Period of the Senas and other Minor Dynasties.

The administrative machinery set up during the Pāla period continued under the Senas, and was also adopted, as far as local conditions permitted, by the Kāmbojas, Chandras, Varmans and other contemporary minor ruling dynasties. The records of these dynasties, however, reveal some new developments.

As regards administrative divisions, smaller territorial units such as *pāṭakas, chaturakas,* and *āvṛittis* come into prominence (*v. supra* p. 23). We have references to *Bhuktipati, Maṇḍalapati* and *Vishayapati,* who were undoubtedly rulers of the three territorial units. The extent of Puṇḍravardhana-*bhukti* was vastly increased under the Senas (*v. supra* p. 24) and this single *bhukti* included the whole of the modern Rajshahi, Dacca and Presidency Divisions, and a part, at least, of the Chittagong Division. On the other hand the jurisdiction of the Vardhamāna-*bhukti* was curtailed, at least in the north, and a new *bhukti,* with Kaṅkagrāma as centre, was established (*v. supra* p. 28). The reasons for these changes are not apparent.

The later Sena kings assumed additional titles such as *aśvapati, gajapati, narapati, rājatrayādhipati,* and these are also applied to Daśaratha-deva. We also come across the term *Mahā-mantrī* denoting the Prime Minister.[1]

It is interesting to note that the stereotyped list of persons (App. c) to whom commands are issued in copper-plate grants

[1] The term *Mahā-mantrī* does not occur in the regular list of officials. But the grandfather of Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva is said to have been a *Mahā-mantrī* of the king of Vaṅga (Belāva cp. v. 10, *IB*. 33).

includes the queen (*rājñī* or *mahishī*) who does not figure in similar lists of even a single record of the Pāla kings. Whether this addition signifies any political importance of the queen it is difficult to say, but as the Chandras, Varmans, Kāmbojas and Senas, whose records contain the addition, all originally belonged to territories outside Bengal,[1] the innovation might be due to foreign influence.

More significant, however, is the inclusion of *Purohita* in the grants of the Kāmboja, Varman and Sena kings. It indicates the great importance attached to religious and social aspects of administration during the rule of these dynasties which were all followers of orthodox Hinduism. This view is supported by traditions current in Bengal in respect of king Sāmalavarman, Harivarman, Vallālasena and Lakshmaṇasena to which reference will be made in Ch. xv *infra*. It is noteworthy that the designation *Purohita* is changed to *Mahā-Purohita* in the later Sena records. Mention is also made of *Śāntyāgārika*, *Śāntyāgārādhikṛita* and *Śāntivārika* who were evidently priests in charge of various religious rites, though it is not definitely known whether they were regular officials. Another office of the same type was probably that of *Rāja-paṇḍita*.[2]

The importance of *Mahā-sāndhivigrahika* seems to have been considerably increased (see App. c) and we come across two new high officials, *Mahā-mudrādhikṛita* and *Mahā-sarvādhikṛita*. The exact meaning of these terms is not clear, but the first probably was an officer of the status of Lord Privy Seal. It is interesting to note that the second name still survives in Bengal in the title '*Sarvādhikārī*.'

The head of the Judiciary is called *Mahā-dharmādhyaksha*. Similarly we meet with new names in the Military Department, such as *Mahā-pīlupati*, *Mahā-gaṇastha*, and *Mahā-vyūhapati*. Whether these are new functionaries or merely new names for old officers, it is difficult to say. The Army Department seems to include, in addition to infantry, cavalry, elephants and ships, also herds of cows, buffaloes, goats and sheep.[3] It is not unlikely, however,

[1] Rāmganj CP. of Īśvaraghosha (*IB.* 149) and the Sundarban CP. of Ḍommaṇapāla (*IHQ.* x. 321) also contain '*rājñī*,' but these may be due to imitation of the prevailing custom. Besides, Ḍommaṇapāla was also a foreigner, his family having migrated from Ayodhyā.

[2] '*Rājapaṁ*' in l. 56 of the Madhyapāḍā Ins. of Viśvarūpasena has been taken as an abbreviation of *Rājapaṇḍita* (*IB.* 142). The name, however, does not occur in the stereotyped list of officials.

[3] The expression used in the grants of the Chandra, Varman and Sena kings is '*nau-bala-hasty-aśva-go-mahish-āj-āvik-ādi-vyāpṛitaka*. The Rāmganj CP. of

that though enumerated along with the four military divisions, they really refer to the civil departments connected with these animals, as in the Pāla period. Their use during wars probably obliterated any real distinctions between the two departments for all practical purposes.

The copper-plate of Īśvaraghosha[1] mentions the names of twenty-nine officials (App. D) which are not met with in any other records in Bengal. Among them are five palace officers *viz.* *Mahā-tantrādhikṛita,* probably the High-Priest in charge of religious rites, *Mahā-karaṇādhyaksha,* probably the chief of the Secretariat, *Śirorakshika,* probably the chief of royal body-guard, and *Antaḥ-pratīhāra* and *Ābhyantarika,* both evidently connected with the harem of the king. That the kings maintained a fairly big harem is definitely proved by the statement in the Belāva CP. of Bhoja-varman that Sāmalavarman's 'seraglio was full of the daughters of many kings.'[2]

Three of the new names, *Mahā-balākoshṭhika, Mahā-balādhi-karaṇika* and *Vṛiddha-dhānushka* were important military officials, though their exact status is not known. The second name seems to indicate the existence of a regular military office or secretariat (*adhikaraṇa*).

In the Revenue Department we meet with a new name *Haṭṭapati,* who was presumably the Superintendent of markets which were undoubtedly great sources of revenue. A similar official, though not probably connected with revenues, was *Pānīyāgārika* who most likely supervised the rest-houses where travellers could get shelter, food and water.

The Sundarban CP. of Ḍommaṇapāla refers to '*Sapt-āmātya.*' Its exact significance is unknown, but it is difficult to accept as valid the inference that the number of ministers in the Sena period was fixed at seven.[3]

The Irdā copper-plate[4] of the Kāmboja king Nayapāla throws new light on the organisation of administration. It includes in the list of officials "the Heads of Departments (*adhyakshavargga*) along with the clerks (*Karaṇa*) ; the Commander-in-Chief (*Senāpati*) with the heads of military associations (*sainika-saṅgha-mukhya*) ; the Ambassadors (*Dūta*) with the officers of the Secret Service

Īśvaraghosha (*IB.* 149) has '*hasty-aśv-oshṭra-nau-bala-vyāpṛitaka*' *and* '*go-mahishy-aj-āvika-vaḍav-ādhyaksha*'; cf. *supra* p. 277, f.n. 1.

[1] *IB.* 149.

[2] Cf. v. 12 (*IB.* 20).

[3] *EHBP.* I. 120, where reference is made to *Sapta-sachiva,* but the expression actually used in the Ins. is *Sapt-āmātya.*

[4] Pāla Ins. No. 49.

(*gūḍha-purusha*) ; and the political advisers (*Mantrapāla*)." It thus clearly testifies to the organisation of each Civil Department under a Head or Superintendent assisted by a number of subordinates. As regards the Military Department there were various organised units whose chiefs assisted the Commander-in-Chief. The Foreign Department seems to have had two distinct branches, one dealing with general policy regarding external affairs, and the other corresponding to an Intelligence Department, whose fields of activity presumably lay in foreign countries. This shows a striking resemblance to the system described in Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra,* and the inclusion among the officials of *Pradeshṭṛis,* a term also used in the same treatise, strengthens the conclusion that the administrative system in Bengal was largely based on the framework described in Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra.*

It is interesting to note in this connection that the stereotyped list of officials in the grants of the Chandra, Varman and early Sena kings concludes with the following words: "...and all those royal officers, mentioned in *adhyaksha-prachāra,* but not included in the above list." '*Adhyaksha-prachāra,*' as is well-known, is the name of a chapter in Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* which deals with heads of departments and other high officials.

The brief outline given above is all that we can glean from available data regarding the history of the administrative system in Bengal. But inadequate and unsatisfactory though it is, it undoubtedly proves the gradual evolution of an organised administrative machinery and indicates that this province did not lag behind other parts of India in this respect.

APPENDIX

A

List of officials mentioned in the Mallasārul Copper-plate of the time of king Gopachandra.

1. Āgrahārika—Supervisor of *agrahāra* lands, *i.e.* lands offered as free gifts to Brāhmaṇas for their subsistence or settlement therein, or for some religious purposes.
2. Audraṅgika—Collector of *Udraṅga* which is probably a tax on permanent tenants (U. N. Ghoshal—*Hindu Revenue System*, 210).
3. Aurṇasthānika—Officer in charge of woollen articles (?) (*IC*. VI. 160).
4. Āvasathika—Probably the supervisor of royal palace and other government buildings, including temples, rest-houses *etc.*
5. Bhogapatika (p. 278) —Kielhorn takes *bhoga* as equivalent to *bhukti* (*EI*. IV. 253, f.n. 6).
6. Chauroddharaṇika (p. 278)—Some regard him as a high police official (*EHBP*. 146).
7. Devadroṇī-sambaddha—Officer entrusted with *deva-droṇī* (probably temples and sacred tanks).
8. Hiraṇyasāmudāyika—Probably collector of taxes paid in cash (p. 277).
9. Kārtākṛitika.
10. Kumārāmātya—District Officer (p. 265). For other meanings of this term, cf. R. D. Banerji—*Imperial Guptas*, pp. 71 ff. His contention that some of the *Kumārāmātyas* were equal in rank to the heir-apparent and even to His Majesty the king is highly improbable. The word *-pādīya*, which Mr. Banerji interprets as 'equal in rank,' should rather be taken as 'belonging to the foot of.' In other words *Kumārāmātya* was the general name of a class of officials some of whom were directly under the king or the crown-prince. It is difficult to accept the usual interpretation of *Kumārāmātya* as Prince's Minister. The term probably refers to one who has hereditary right to a high office of state.

11. Pattalaka—*Pattalā* denotes a territorial unit in Gāhaḍavāla records (*EI.* XIX. 293).
12. Tadāyuktaka—This may be a class of officials called *āyuktaka* (pp. 265, 270).
13. Uparika—Provincial Governor; probably also used in the sense of a superior officer (p. 265).
14. Vāhanāyaka—(p. 269)
15. Vishayapati—District-Officer (p. 265).

B

List of officials mentioned in the land-grants of Pāla kings (excluding the compound terms noted supra p. 277, f.n. 1.).

1. Abhitvaramāṇa (also with suffix '*ka*').
2. Amātya—Probably a general designation of a class of high officials (p. 277.).
3. Aṅgaraksha—p. 277.
4. Balādhyaksha—Officer in charge of infantry (p. 277, f.n. 1).
5. Bhogapati—p. 278 (Cf. A. 5).
6. Chauroddharaṇika—p. 278 (Cf. A. 6).
7. Dāṇḍapāśika—p. 278.
8. Daṇḍaśakti—p. 278.
9. Dāṇḍika—p. 278.
10. Dāśagrāmika—pp. 269, f.n. 1; 273, f.n. 1; 277.
11. Dāśāparādhika—Probably an officer who collected fines for ten specified kinds of criminal offences (p. 278, f.n. 3).
12. Daussādha-sādhanika.
13. Dūta—Ambassador.
14. Dūta-praishaṇika—This is written as one name, but as *Rājasthānīya* and *Uparika* are treated as different in Ins. No. 6, and as one name in other inscriptions, *dūta-praishaṇika* may be really names of two officials, *dūta* and *praishaṇika.* As a compound word it literally means 'one who sends out a messenger' (*IB.* 185).
15. Gamāgamika.
16. Gaulmika—Probably an officer in charge of a military squadron called *gulma,* consisting of 9 elephants, 9 chariots, 27 horses and 45 foot-soldiers. *Gulma,* however, also means a wood, fort and a police-station. Dr. Fleet translates *gaulmika* as 'superintendent of woods and forests' (*CII.* III. 52, f.n. 4). Dr. U. N.

Ghoshal takes *gaulmika* as collector of customs duties (*op. cit.* 246) and refers to '*gulmadeya,*' used in the *Arthaśāstra* in the sense of 'dues paid at the military or the police stations' (p. 292). His view is evidently based on the fact that *śaulkika* is immediately followed by *gaulmika* in the Pāla records; but, in Sena records *gaulmika* immediately follows the names of military officials.

17. Grāmapati—Head-man of a village.
18. Jyeshṭha-kāyastha—pp. 272, 273, 278 (Cf. *prathama-kāyastha,* p. 266).
19. Khaṇḍaraksha—p. 280. The *Ardha-Māgadhī Dictionary* translates it as 'Customs-Inspector or Superintendent of Police.' Dr. U. N. Ghoshal regards it as a military official (*IHQ.* XIV. 839).
20. Khola—p. 278. Spy (according to *Ardha-Māgadhī Dictionary,* on the authority of *Piṇḍa-niryukti* attributed to Bhadrabāhu).
21. Koṭṭapāla (also Koṭapāla)—Officer in charge of forts (p. 278).
22. Kshetrapa—p. 278. Probably an officer in charge of lands under cultivation.
23. Kumārāmātya (Cf. A 10).
24. Mahā-daṇḍanāyaka—Chief Judge, General, or Magistrate (p. 278).
25. Mahā-daussādha-sādhanika—(cf. No. 12).
26. Mahā-kārtākṛitika—(cf. A. 9).
27. Mahākshapaṭalika—p. 278.
28. Mahā-kumārāmātya—Higher class of Kumārāmātya (cf. A. 10).
29. Mahā-pratīhāra—*Pratīhāra* means a door-keeper. Mahā-Pratīhāra was evidently a high official in the Police or Military department. The title is applied to both military and civil administrative officers and feudatories (pp. 52, f.n. 2; 271, 274, 278).
30. Mahā-sāndhivigrahika—p. 277. Sāndhivigrahika occurs in Ins. No. 46 as the *dūtaka* of the grant, but is not included in the regular list. Cf. App. c. No. 13.
31. Mahā-senāpati—p. 278. Commander-in-Chief.
32. Nākādhyaksha (probably a mistake for Nāvādhyaksha or Naukādhyaksha—Superintendent of ships).
33. Pramātṛi—Probably an officer in charge of land-survey (p. 278). According to some, he was a judicial officer in charge of recording evidence.

34. Prāntapāla—Warden of Marches (p. 278).
35. Rājāmātya—p. 277. *Amātya* generally denotes high officials of state. As this name occurs immediately after Rājaputra, it has been taken by some as denoting a high minister of state, probably the 'Prime Minister' (*EHBP*. 114).
36. Rājasthānīya—Regent or Viceroy (p. 277).
37. Samāgamika—It occurs only once in Ins. No. 2 and is probably a mistake for No. 15.
38. Sa (or Śa) rabhaṅga.
39. Śaulkika—Collector of tolls and custom dues (p. 278).
40. Śaunika—This term occurs only in Ins. No. 46 in the place where we would expect *śaulkika*. So it may be a mistake for this term. Otherwise it probably denotes the Superintendent of slaughter-house (cf. *Sūnādhyaksha* in *Arthaśāstra*, II. Ch. XXVI).
41. Senāpati—p. 278. Commander of the army.
42. Shashṭhādhikṛita—p. 278.
43. Tadāyuktaka—(cf. A. 12).
44. Tarapati (also Tarapatika)—Probably supervisor of ferries.
45. Tarika—Probably collector of ferry dues.
46. Uparika—Provincial Governor (p. 265). It is preceded by *rājasthānīya* (No. 36), probably a separate official, but some take the two together (p. 273, f.n. 1).
47. Viniyuktaka.
48. Vishayapati—District-Officer.

C

List of officials mentioned in the land-grants of Chandra, Varman, and Sena kings excluding (1) the compound term 'nau-bala-hasty-aśva-go-mahish-āj-āvik-ādi-vyāpṛitaka' (for which see supra p. 277) and (2) the names already noted in App. B (Nos. 6, 7, 13, 16, 21, 27, 29, 31, 35, 39, 48). For notes and interpretations cf. IB 183 ff. The following notes may be regarded as only supplementary.

1. Antaraṅga—For various suggestions about its meaning cf. *IC*. I. 684; *EHBP*. 118. Cf. *supra*, p. 271.
2. Bṛihad-uparika—cf. A. 13; B. 46.

3. Dandanāyaka—cf. B. 24.
4. Dauḥ-sādhanika (also, Dauḥ-sādhya-sādhanika)—cf. B. 12.
5. Mahā-bhogika—cf. A. 5, B. 5.
6. Mahā-dharmādhyaksha—Chief Justice.
7. Mahā-duḥsādhika (cf. 4).
8. Mahā-gaṇastha—Probably a military officer. *Gaṇa* denotes a body of troops consisting of 27 chariots, as many elephants, 81 horses, and 135 foot. Mr. N. G. Majumdar interprets it differently (*IB.* 186).
9. Mahā-mahattaka—It has been interpreted as Prime Minister (*IB.* 131), but this is very doubtful.
10. Mahā-mudrādhikṛita—p. 281. Some take it as the *Mudrādhyaksha* of the *Arthaśāstra, i.e.* the Superintendent of Passports. It does not, however, seem to have any connection with coins or currency, as the use of *mudrā,* in the sense of a coin, belongs to a later period.
11. Mahā-pīlupati—Probably the chief trainer of elephants.
12. Mahā-purohita—Chief Priest (p. 281).
13. Mahā-sāndhivigrahika—This name also occurs in the Pāla records. But the office was one of great importance during this period. Both Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva and Ādideva, his grandfather, were *Sāndhivigrahika* and Prime Minister of kings of Vaṅga. In the Bhāwāl CP. of Lakshmaṇasena, Śaṅkaradhara, the *Mahā-sāndhivigrahika* of Gauḍa, is said to be the chief of a hundred *mantrins* (*EI.* XXVI. 10, 13). This officer was also generally the *dūtaka* of Sena grants.
14. Mahā-sarvādhikṛita—p. 281.
15. Mahā-vyūhapati—Military officer in charge of battle-arrays (*vyūha*).
16. Maṇḍala-pati—Officer in charge of a *maṇḍala.*
17 Pīṭhikāvitta—Probably an officer concerned with the arrangement of seats in an assembly or the royal court according to rank and status of their occupiers.
18. Purohita—Priest (p. 281).
19. Sāndhivigrahika—Cf. No. 13.

D

List of officials mentioned in the Rāmganj CP. *of Īśvara-ghosha, and not met with in any other record in Bengal.*

1. Ābhyantarika—p. 282.
2. Aṅgikaraṇika—Officer for administering oaths (?)
3. Antaḥ-pratīhāra—p. 282.
4. Autthitāsanika—Officer in charge of arranging seats (?)
5. Bhuktipati—Head of a Province. But "*Uparika*" is also mentioned separately.
6. Daṇḍapāla—Probably the same as C. 3.
7. Dāṇḍapāṇika—Cf. B. 7-9.
8. Ekasaraka.
9. Haṭṭapati—p. 282.
10. Karmakara—Was he an Officer in charge of Labour?
11. Khaḍgagrāha—Body-guard?
12. Khaṇḍapāla—Probably the same as B. 19.
13. Koṭṭapati—Probably the same as B. 21.
14. Lekhaka—Scribe.
15. Mahā-balādhikaraṇika—p. 282.
16. Mahā-balākoshṭhika—p. 282.
17. Mahā-bhogapati—Cf. B. 5.
18. Mahā-karaṇādhyaksha—p. 282.
19. Mahā-kaṭuka.
20. Mahā-kāyastha—Chief Scribe or Clerk (Cf. B. 18).
21. Mahā-pādamūlika—Chief Attendant (?)
22. Mahā-tantrādhikṛita—p. 282.
23. Pānīyāgārika—p. 282.
24. Sāntakika.
25. Śirorakshika—p. 282.
26. Tadāniyuktaka—Probably the same as B. 43.
27. Ṭhakkura.
28. Vāsāgārika—Officer in charge of residential buildings (?)
29. Vṛiddha-dhānushka—p. 282.

CHAPTER XI

SANSKRIT LITERATURE

THE early literary history of Bengal, to which or to parts of which references commence with comparatively late Vedic literature, is for the most part a matter for conjecture. We have seen[1] that in the period or periods during which the Vedic Saṁhitās came into existence, Bengal had not probably yet characterised itself as a political and cultural, much less as a literary, unit of the northern Aryan India. While the Vājasaneyi recension of the *Yajurveda*, in which the easterner Yājñavalkya plays a leading part, had its most probable origin in the east (Videha), it is curious that Magadha and Aṅga still serve to the *Atharva-veda* (v. 22. 14) as a symbol of a distant land, and the more eastern provinces are never mentioned. We have also seen that the extension of Vedic civilisation must have been further achieved in what is conventionally called the Brāhmaṇa period; but one of the latest of the major Brāhmaṇas, the *Śatapatha*, which belongs to the Vājasaneyi and which bears witness to much cultural activity in Videha, describes (XIII. 8. 5) the people of the east as hostile or demoniac (*āsurya*). Similarly the eastern land of Puṇḍra receives disapproval in the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* (VII. 18) as the home of Dasyus; and in a dubious, but probably not very complimentary, passage in the *Aitareya Āraṇyaka* (II. 1. 1) the composite tribe of Vaṅgāvagadha[2] receives mention in a list of tribes who were guilty of transgression. This tradition of the association of Vaṅga, along with Puṇḍra, with outcast tribes is preserved as late as the *Bodhāyana Dharma-sūtra* (I. 2. 14), which prescribes penances to those who visit these unclean lands. The imperfect Aryanisation of a greater part of what is known as Bengal is perhaps responsible for this attitude of frank dislike; and linguistic and ethonological evidences make the presence of Kol-Muṇḍā and Dravidian tribes in these regions highly probable. But it is also possible that Bengal in this period had a culture which was not only non-Aryan but also non-Vedic, presumably fostered by the hypothetical Outer Aryans of Grierson. The Midland Brahmanic culture must have taken a fairly long time to strike its root in the eastern soil; and the same causes as rendered Magadha the probable headquarters of the non-Vedic Vrātya Aryans also made it, in later history, the starting ground of at least two great non-Brahmanical religious systems.

[1] See *supra* p. 7.

[2] The question is discussed *supra* p. 8.

The racial and political units of Bengal, on the other hand, are mentioned as quite prosperous and powerful in the *Mahābhārata*, in which the eastern tribes of Magadha, Aṅga, Vaṅga, Puṇḍra, Suhma and Kaliṅga play an important part; but there is no reference to any literary activity in these countries. The professional story-tellers and reciters, known as Sūtas and Māgadhas,[1] however, to whom has been ascribed the preservation of epic tales, were in all probability, as the latter designation also indicates, people of the east. As the man of Magadha is *par excellence* the designation of a minstrel, it is not unlikely that Magadha was in epic times the seat of minstrelsy; and this conjecture appears to receive support from a reference in the *Vājasaneyi-saṁhitā* (xxx. 5) to the symbolic sacrifice of the man of Magadha to "loud noise" (*atikrushṭāya māgadham*). The man of the east, especially of Magadha,[2] has also been connected with the nomadic Vrātya, with his weird dress, appearance and speech and equally weird rites and ceremonies, described in the *Atharva-veda* xv and elsewhere;[3] but no mention is made of any kind of literary culture, and all that we can plausibly infer from the somewhat vague and obscure references is that the speech of the Vrātya,[4] though Aryan, betrayed Prakritic habits, indicating a more rapid linguistic change of the Indo-Aryan in the eastern provinces. That the standard language was that of the North (Udīchya), from which dialects of the provinces, including the East (Prāchya), must have shown deviations, is confirmed by the view of the later Vedic period, which is expressed in the *Kaushītaki Brāhmaṇa* (VII. 6), that

"in the northern region speech is spoken with greater discernment; men, therefore, go to the north to learn speech; he who comes from there, they like to hearken unto him."[5]

It is no wonder, therefore, that the northerner Pāṇini should, in his great and standard grammar, refer to the peculiarities of the

[1] E. Washburn Hopkins, *Great Epic of India* (New Haven 1920), p. 364 f.

[2] *Lāṭyāyana Śrauta Sūtra,* viii. 6. 28; *Kātyāyana Śrauta Sūtra,* xxii. 4. 22. On these passages see J. W. Hauer, *Der Vrātya* (Stuttgart 1927), pp. 6-7, 96-97 and 143 f.

[3] The location of the Vrātyas is uncertain, but some of them probably settled in Magadha and the eastern provinces; see *CHI*. I. 123. A full and critical *résumé* of the Vedic texts on the Vrātya problem is given in J. W. Hauer, *op. cit.* Charpentier (*WZKM*. xxv. 355-68) finds the Rudra-Śiva cult in the Vrātya practices, but A. B. Keith (*JRAS*. 1915, p. 155) rejects this hypothesis. See Hauer, *op. cit.* p. 297 f. on the religious ideas of the Vrātyas.

[4] As described in *Tāṇḍya Mahābrāhmaṇa,* xvii. 1. 9. Cf. Weber's explanation in his *Indian Literature* (Eng. tr. London 1904), pp. 67, 68. A discussion of this passage will be found in Hauer, *op. cit.* pp. 69, 168-72, 174 f.

[5] *tasmād udīchyāṁ diśi prajñātatarā vāg udyate, udañcha u eva yanti vāchaṁ śikshituṁ, yo vā tata āgachchhati tasya vā śuśrūshanta iti.*

eastern speech; and the earliest indication of some kind of literary activity in the east is to be presumed from his references to eastern grammarians. The eastern peculiarities noticed by Pāṇini concern the designation of some eastern people (ii. 4. 66; iv. 1. 178; iv. 2. 113; viii. 3. 75) and of certain parts of the east (i. 1. 75; iv. 2. 76, 120, 123, 139), the formation of the names of certain eastern cities, villages and their inhabitants (vi. 2. 99; vii. 3. 14, 24), an eastern peculiarity in the name of a game (vi. 2. 74), the morphology of eastern proper names (ii. 4, 60; iv. 1. 17; v. 3. 80), the designation of tributes which may have been rendered by the north to the east or *vice versa* (vi. 3. 10), the name of certain measures of weight which may have been known from eastern merchants (v. 4. 101) and the eastern mode of the articulation in greeting a person (viii. 2. 86); but much more interesting are the direct references he makes to the views of eastern grammarians (iii. 1. 90; iii. 4. 18; iv. 1. 17, 43, 160; v. 3. 80, 94; v. 4. 101; viii. 2. 86) in regard to the morphology, phonetics and syntax of the eastern dialect. It is clear that in Pāṇini's time, as in that of the *Kaushītaki Brāhmaṇa*, the standard literary language was still the dialect of the north, to which Pāṇini himself belonged;[1] but his reference to the opinion of eastern grammarians also makes it probable that linguistic speculations in the east must have acquired such a position in his time that it became necessary for him to take them into account. Such linguistic speculations doubtless indicate the existence of a respectable body of literature on which they based themselves; but nothing unfortunately has survived, and this literature is now only a matter of surmise. It should also be noted that no definite denotation can be attached to Pāṇini's *Prāñch* or *Prāchya*. If it is equivalent to the *Prasii* of the Greek writers, it would denote preferably the people of Magadha; but in all probability it was a much more extensive term which included the peoples or provinces east of the Middle Country (*i.e.* east, roughly, of Allahabad)[2] and would not therefore

[1] There is no reason to doubt the traditional assumption that Pāṇini was a northern grammarian. R. Otto Francke's opinion (*Goettinger gelehrte Anzeigen*, 1891, pp. 957, 975 f) that "in Pāṇini's period the Brahman people had their centres in the East" is negatived not only by Pāṇini's manner of referring to the views of the eastern grammarians, but also, as Paul Thiem has shown (*Pāṇini and the Veda*, Allahabad 1935, p. 73 f), by Pāṇini's relation to the northern Vedic schools and by the probability, which Weber had already considered (*Indische Studien*, v. 50), that Pāṇini scarcely makes any use of the *Vājasaneyi-saṁhitā* and its *Brāhmaṇas*, Pāṇini's citation of Udīchya grammarians does not invalidate this position.

[2] The Vinaya references to Madhyadeśa probably fix its limits up to Puṇḍravardhana (see *infra* Ch. XIII).

possess any particular application to Bengal. It is noteworthy, however, that the word *Gauḍa* in the sense of a country is already known to Pāṇini's *Ashṭādhyāyī* (VI. 2. 100),[1] and the *Gaṇa-pāṭha* (lxxiv 9) mentions Vaṅga.

We do not know exactly when the Aryanisation of Bengal took place. If Magadha received the Aryan culture and language long before the time of the Buddha, the disparaging references in the later Vedic literature make it likely that the Aryans of the east stood apart for some time from those of the west in dialect, customs and practices. During the domination of the Mauryas, who were easterners, Bengal was probably linked to the Aryan India of the north; but we have no record of literary activity in Bengal in the first few centuries of its Aryanisation. We have the earliest mention of Suhma and Rāḍhā in the Jaina *Āyāraṅga Sutta*,[2] which tells us that Mahāvīra travelled "in the pathless countries of the Lāḍhas in Vajjabhūmi and Subbhabhūmi"; but it is curious that no inscription of Aśoka nor any early Jaina record has been discovered in Bengal proper. Patañjali, after Pāṇini, shows himself familiar with Pāṭaliputra and betrays (on Pa° iv. 2. 52)[3] a greater knowledge of the political divisions of the east; for he mentions together Aṅga, Vaṅga, Suhma and Puṇḍra. In another interesting passage,[4] which he may have borrowed and amplified from Yāska (ii. 2), he gives us some dialectological information regarding the employment of certain verbs in a peculiar sense by the people of the east.[5] He refers also (I. 1. 1) to the usage[6] of *l* for *r*, which became one of the important characteristics of the later Māgadhī Prakrit, but which, in his opinion, is Āsura pronun-

[1] In this rule Pāṇini teaches that when the words *arishṭa* and *gauḍa* stand first in a compound, the first member has an acute accent on the final syllable before the word *pura*. From the preceding rule, which speaks of compounds dealing with a city of the eastern people, as well as from the following rule which also has a similar application, there can be no doubt that the word Gauḍa here signifies the name of a country.

[2] *SBE*. XXII. 48. Jacobi identifies Lāḍha with Rāḍha, and Subbhabhūmī with the country of Suhma. In the *Kalpa-sūtra* the Jaina ascetic orders are named Puṇḍravardhanīya, Koṭivarshīya and Tāmraliptika (p. 288, *SBE*. XXII).

[3] Ed. Kielhorn, iii, p. 282.

[4] Ed. Kielhorn, i, p. 49.

[5] *Viz. dāti* in the sense 'to cut' and *raṁhati* in the sense 'to go'; in the former case Patañjali speaks of *prāchyeshu*, in the latter *prāchya-madhyeshu*. He uses the word *prāchya* (on Pa° iv. 2. 138, ed. Kielhorn, p. 301) in connection with the Charaṇas or Vedic schools prevailing in the east. On the passage from Yāska see Liebich, *Zur Einfürung in die indische einheimische Sprachwissenschaft*, II. 24 f and Hannes Skold, *Nirukta*, p. 80 f and references cited therein.

[6] On this usage see Macdonell and Keith, *Vedic Index*, II. 517 and Grierson in *ZDMG*. LXVI. 66, note.

ciation, the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* having already described the Prāchya as *āsurya*. While these references to the debased speech of the east confirm the presumption that modifications of the standard language occurred early in the eastern provinces, they add very little to our knowledge of the linguistic and literary activity in the east, the existence of which should be presumed to explain the grammarian's interest.

After several centuries, when the Gupta rulers came to power, the only definite evidence of Sanskrit culture[1] is afforded by inscriptional records, discovered in Bengal, which give us the earliest instances of actual Sanskrit composition. Leaving aside the short early Brāhmī inscription from Māhāsthān, and the lithic record (three lines) of Chandravarman,[2] on the Susunia Hill in West Bengal, we have eight short copper-plates[3] which, issued by the local officers of the Gupta Emperors in North Bengal, cover in dates one century between 443 and 543 A.D. But these brief prose specimens are hardly of any literary value. It is not until we come to the 7th century A.D. that we find the high-flown Kāvya-style in prose and verse employed in the epigraphic records, such, for instance, as displayed in the Tippera copper-plates of Lokanātha,[4] or the Nidhanpur copper-plates of Bhāskaravarman.[5] The testimony of the Chinese pilgrim, Fa-hien, however, who visited India in the beginning of the 5th century and spent two years at Tāmralipti in studying and copying manuscripts, supplements the rather scanty evidence of copper-plates and inscriptions.[6] The later and much more extensive itinerary, in the 7th century, of Hiuen Tsang, who visited Puṇḍravardhana, Kāmarūpa, Samataṭa, and Karṇasuvarṇa, is remarkable for its references to the love of learning of the people, as well as to the existence of more than seventy Buddhist monasteries in these lands as seats of learning, hundreds of Deva-temples, and a large number of Nirgrantha ascetics.[7] I-tsing, coming to India a little later, definitely states that he learned Sanskrit and the science of words (Śabda-vidyā) in Tāmralipti.[8] These foreign travellers do not refer to any

[1] The chauvinistic attempt to appropriate Kālidāsa to Bengal hardly needs any comment. Curiously enough, it ignores the poet's not very complimentary references to the people of Vaṅga and Suhma (*Raghu°*, IV. 35-36) who abjectly prostrated themselves before the conqueror Raghu.

[2] *EI.* XIII. 133.

[3] See *supra* p. 49.

[4] *EI.* XV. 301 f.

[5] *Ibid.* XII. 65 f.

[6] J. Legge, *Record of the Buddhist Kingdoms*, p. 100.

[7] Watters, II. 184-91. For an analysis of Hiuen Tsang's remarks on the language see Chatterji-*Lang.* 78-79.

[8] Takakusu-*I-tsing.* p. XXXI.

literary activity, but they furnish definite evidence of the existence in this period of Sanskrit learning and culture in Bengal.

It is necessary in this connection to notice a few works of a technical Śāstric character, which have been credited to Bengal of the Gupta and post-Gupta periods. The first of these is a work on elephant-lore, entitled *Hasty-āyurveda*,[1] which, after the manner of the Purāṇas and in the form of a dialogue held in Champā between king Romapāda of Aṅga and the sage Pālakāpya[2] (or °kāppa), gives in four sections an elaborate account of the ailments peculiar to elephants. This Romapāda is mentioned as the mythical contemporary of Daśaratha famed in the *Rāmāyaṇa*; and the author, endowed with a fictitious Kāpya *gotra* and possibly with a fictitious name, is likewise a legendary figure, his father having been a sage and his mother a she-elephant! In I. 1. 39 and 101 a reference is made to the hermitage of Pālakāpya, which is placed in the region where the river Lauhitya (Brahmaputra) flows from the Himālayas to the sea. In spite of the obviously legendary character of the narrator and his hearer, it is surmised that the work was redacted in some place in Bengal on the banks of the Brahmaputra. Since the device of a legendary narrator and hearer is common enough in the Purāṇas, from which it is evidently borrowed, it would not be safe to base merely on it any chronological inference; but, as high an antiquity has been claimed for the production as the 5th or 6th century B.C.![3] The first surmise is not unlikely; and Hiuen Tsang[4] speaks of wild elephants which ravaged in herds in Kāmarūpa (Western Assam), which he takes to be the confines of "East India." The date of the work is certainly earlier than that of Kshīrasvāmin, who in the 11th century quotes Pālakāpya twice in his commentary on the *Amara-kośa* (on II. 8. 38; III. 3. 148);[5] and it is probable that it could not have been redacted at a very late period, inasmuch as the encyclopaedic *Agni-purāṇa*, some of whose Śāstric sections have to be dated earlier than the 10th

[1] Ed. *An.* SS., No. 26. The work is also called *Gaja-chikitsā*, *Gaja-vidyā*, *Gaja-vaidya* and *Gajāyurveda*. Mss. noticed in Auf.-*Cat.* I. 141 a, 336 b; II. 28 a. See J. Jolly, *Medicin*, p. 14, sec. 12.

[2] P. C. Bagchi (*IHQ.* 1933, p. 261) believes that the name *Pāla* here signifies elephant, from Dravidian *pal* (=elephant), while he connects *-kāpya* with *kapi*, which he thinks had the same sense. If this is correct, the name itself becomes entirely fictitious, and we need not assume that any such person actually existed.

[3] Haraprasād Śāstrī is inclined (*JBORS.* 1919, p. 313) to assign the work to the 5th or 6th century B.C. (*Cf. Ibid.* 1924, p. 317).

[4] Watters, II. 186.

[5] These verses are, however, not traceable in the present text.

century,[1] tells us that its chapter on the Gaja-chikitsā[2] is based upon Pālakāpya's narration to King Romapāda of Aṅga.[3] It is not improbable that Kālidāsa alludes to Pālakāpya[4] when he makes Sunandā, during the Svayaṁvara of Indumatī (*Raghu*° VI. 27), describe the king of Aṅga as one "whose elephants are trained by Sūtra-kāras." Pālakāpya's present work is written not in the form of Sūtra but in Kārikā with occasional prose exposition, somewhat in the manner of Bharata's *Nāṭya-śāstra;* but since Bharata has also been called a Muni and Sūtra-kāra, a similar allusion to Pālakāpya is not improbable. If this presumption is acceptable, then Pālakāpya's treatise on elephant-science, like Bharata's work on Dramaturgy. must be taken as embodying a traditional compendium, which was redacted in Aṅga or in some place on the banks of the Brahmaputra, sometime before Kālidāsa, in the name of a legendary sage, who first systematised the science, and in the form and diction of an ancient Śāstra. The present text is an extensive compilation of 160 chapters, covering 700 pages in the printed edition, and is divided (after medical works) into four Sthānas or sections, namely, Mahāroga (principal diseases, 18 chapters), Kshudra-roga (minor diseases, 72 chapters), Śalya (Surgery, 34 chapters) and Uttara (Therapy, Bath, Dietics etc., 36 chapters). The science, to which Kauṭilya refers when he speaks of elephant-doctors, and which at one time must have possessed considerable importance in India, is now nearly lost, and its technicalities have become obscure; but Pālakāpya's earliest authoritative contribution to the subject deserves mention as presumably an eastern production of great interest.

With regard to the next author, Chandragomin, who is recognised as the founder of the Chāndra school of Sanskrit

[1] See De-*Poetics*. I. 102-4; also for the Smṛiti chapters see R. C. Hazra in *IHQ*. 1936, pp. 683-91. It is noteworthy that the available MSS. of the Purāṇa are almost entirely in Bengali or Devanāgarī scripts, suggesting its prevalence in the Bengali or Devanāgarī area; and the fact that the Bengali MSS. are by far the more plentiful might indicate the eastern origin, or at least popularity, of the Purāṇa. It is, therefore, not surprising that it should cite Pālakāpya.

[2] Ed. *An. SS*. Ch. 287.

[3] Ch. 286, verse 24. Other quotations from Pālakāpya occur in Hemādri's *Vrata-khaṇḍa* (second half of 12th century), Vallālasena's *Adbhuta-sāgara*, Mallinātha's commentary on Raghu° xvi. 3 (14th century), *Vīra-mitrodaya* of Mitramiśra, and *Śārṅgadhara-paddhati* (Nos. 1563-69, 1594-99; 14th century). See S. K. De in *D. R Bhandarkar Vol.*, p. 74, f.n. 3 for references. The passage quoted by Mallinātha occurs in the present text I. i. 218-19. Pālakāpya is also referred to by Hemachandra in his *Abhidhāna-chintāmaṇi* (III. 517; 12th century).

[4] So explained by Hemādri, Chāritravardhana and Mallinātha.

grammar, we are perhaps on a firmer ground, both in respect of approximate date and authorship. In his *Vākyapadīya* (ii. 489-90) Bhartṛihari mentions Baiji, Sauva and Haryaksha as grammarians who went before Chandrāchārya and who by their uncritical methods contributed not a little to the neglect of the *Mahābhāshya* of Patañjali. As this observation accords well with Kalhaṇa's account of the fate of the *Mahābhāshya*,[1] as well as with the curious legend recorded in a late Tibetan work[2] of the censure of Patañjali's work by Chandragomin, it has been assumed that this Chandrāchārya is no other than Chandragomin.[3] B. Liebich who has recovered and edited the *Chāndra-vyākaraṇa* (Sūtra, Uṇādi and Dhātu-pāṭha),[4] as well as its *Vṛitti*,[5] is of opinion[6] that Chandra wrote both the text and the commentary and that he flourished probably in the period between 465 and 544 A.D. The work is certainly earlier than the *Kāśikā* of Jayāditya and Vāmana; for this commentary on Pāṇini appropriates without acknowledgment thirty-five original Sūtras of Chandra's grammar, which had no parallel

[1] It is noteworthy that Kalhaṇa also refers (i. 176) to Chandrāchārya and his grammar and to his reviving the study of the *Mahābhāshya*, but he places Chandrāchārya in Kashmir under Abhimanyu (c. 3rd century A.D.). On this passage see F. Kielhorn (*IA*. IV. 1875), pp. 107-8; B. Liebich, *Kṣīra-taraṅgiṇī*, pp. 270-72

[2] Sumpā, *Pag Sam Jon Zang*, pt. i pp. 95-96. The story is reproduced in S. C. Vidyabhusan, *Hist. of Ind. Logic*, pp. 334-35.

[3] Sastri-*Cat.* VI (*Vyākaraṇa*), preface, p. l, does not accept this identification.

[4] Ed. from Sanskrit MSS., as well as from the Tibetan version, with full indices. The *Gaṇa-pāṭha*, as well as the *Liṅgānuśāsana*, which is quoted by Purushottama-deva in his *Varṇa-deśanā* (Egg.-*Cat.* II. No. 1039/1475 a, p. 295), Ujjvaladatta (ed. Aufrecht, IV. 1), Sarvānanda (on II. 6. 62) and Rāyamukuṭa on Amara (R. G. Bhandarkar-*Report*, 1883-84, p. 468), is missing. But the Chāndra *Gaṇa-pāṭha*, as well as an *Upasarga-vṛitti*, exists in Tibetan. A short *Varṇa-vṛitti* by Chandragomin is published in Belv.-*Systems*, p. 117 (App. I); *cf. JASB*. 1908, pp. 549 ff. A *Pārāyaṇa* by Chandra is quoted by Kshīrasvāmin in his *Kṣīra-taraṅgiṇī* (ed. Liebich x. 82). Liebich has given a bibliography of *Chāndra-vyākaraṇa* and its accessory literature in *Nach. d. Goettingischen Gessellschaft*, 1895, pp. 272-321, summarised in *IA*. 1896, pp. 103-5).

[5] Ed. B. Liebich. In the colophon it is called the work of Dharmadāsa, but Liebich takes it as the name of the pupil who wrote down the master's words. Liebich has given a detailed study of the *Vṛitti* in his *Zür Einführung*, Pt. IV (Analyse der Cāndra-vṛtti).

[6] *WZKM*. XIII (1899), pp. 308-15 and *Das Datum Candragomins and Kālidāsas* (Breslau 1903). The chief ground is that the sentence *ajayad gupto* (MS. *jarto* or *japto*) *hūṇān* in the *Vṛitti* (i. 2. 81, p. 43) mentions the victory of the Gupta over the Hūṇas as an illustration of the use of the Perfect to describe an event in the life-time of the author. But the identity of Jarta or Japta, as given by manuscript-evidence, is not clear; and the conjecture that it is a mislection for Gupta is

in Pāṇini,[1] but which Kayyaṭa distinctly repudiates as un-Pāṇinian. All accounts agree that Chandragomin was a Buddhist; and this is supported not only by his honorific Buddhistic title—*gomin*, but also by the Maṅgala-śloka of the *Vṛitti* which pays homage to Sarvajña. The Tibetan tradition does not distinguish the grammarian Chandragomin from the philosopher Chandragomin, who wrote a work on Logic, entitled *Nyāya-siddhyāloka*,[2] as well as from the Tāntric writer of the same name,[3] to whom thirty-six esoteric texts are ascribed in the *Bstan-ḥgyur*. According to this account,[4] he belonged to a Kshatriya family in Varendra,[5] resided for some time at Chandradvīpa[6] and met the Mādhyamika commentator Chandra-

problematic. Keith-*Drama*, p. 168, appears to think that Jarta refers to a Jāṭ prince! Belvalkar (*op. cit.* p. 58), however, approximates Liebich's dating further to 470 A.D., assuming that the victory over the Hūṇas refers to their defeat by Skandagupta. S. Lévi (*BEFEO.* III. 1903, pp. 38 f.), relying on the mention by I-tsing (Takakusu, *op. cit.* pp. 164, 183) of a great man named Chandra *kouan* (=official) or Chandradāsa, who lived, like a Bodhisattva, in his time in Eastern India and composed a musical play on the Viśvāntara, would identify this Chandra with Chandragomin. As this identification is likely, it would place Chandragomin some time before I-tsing, although it must be admitted that the reference is not entirely free from doubt. Minayeff, on the other hand, believes (Liebich, *Paṇini*, p. 11) that Chandragomin lived as early as the beginning of the 5th century. N. Péri (*BEFEO.* 1911, p. 388, f. n. 2) places Chandragomin in the second half of the 7th century, while S. C. Vidyabhusan (*loc. cit.*) is of opinion that the Tibetan source (*Tar.* 146), in making Chandra a contemporary of Śīla, son of Harshavardhana, would place him at about 700 A.D. But this late date conflicts with the accepted date of the *Kāśikā*, which makes use of the Chāndra-grammar. For a re-discussion of the whole question see Liebich, *Kṣīra-taraṅgiṇī*, pp. 264 ff.

[1] Shown first by Kielhorn in *IA.* 1886, pp. 183-85; See Liebich, *Konkordanz Pāṇini-Candra*, Breslau 1928.

[2] S. C. Vidyabhusan, *op. cit.* p. 336.

[3] See below under Buddhist Tāntric writers. Tāranātha has much that is legendary to relate of Chandragomin and ascribes to him a large number of hymns and learned works.

[4] *Tar.* 148-58 and Sumpā, *loc. cit.* S. C. Vidyabhusan (*loc. cit.*) distinguishes the logician Chandragomin from the grammarian of the same name and assigns a much later date to the former; but he would assign some of the Tāntric Stotras to the latter, although in his *Mediaeval School of Ind. Logic*, pp. 121-23, he does not draw any such distinction.

[5] *Tar.* 148: 'born in Varendra in the east'; Cordier-*Cat.* II. 302: 'inhabitant of Bareṇḍi in Eastern India'; Sumpā, *op. cit.* pp. xci, 95, 139: 'born in Varendra in Baṅgala. S. K. Chatterji believes that the surname *gomin* corresponds to the modern Bengali cognomen *gui.* A. A. Macdonell (*IA.* 1903, p. 376) thinks that Kashmir was Chandragomin's native place, but this is perhaps due to a misapprehension of Kalhaṇa's reference.

[6] Sumpā informs us that Chandragomin settled in Chandrdvīpa after his exile from Varendra. In a work of Chandra-gomin in *Bstan-ḥgyur* (Cordier,

kīrti at Nālandā,[1] where he became a pupil of Sthiramati. Apart from the Tāntric Vajra-yāna Sādhanas mentioned above, Chandragomin is credited with some Sanskrit Stotras on Tārā and Mañjuśrī,[2] a drama called *Lokānanda*[3] and an elegant but insipid religious Kāvya entitled *Śishya-lekha-dharma*[4] in the form of a letter to a pupil. None of these productions, if they really belong to the grammarian Chandragomin, is of much consequence. The *Chāndra-vyākaraṇa,* however, is a much more remarkable work, which had currency at one time in Kashmir, Nepal, Tibet and Ceylon. Although there is no material divergence nor anything original (excepting the thirty-five rules mentioned above), it is not a mere copy but an attempt at a recast and improvement upon the rules of Pāṇini. As against the eight chapters of Pāṇini, it has six chapters of four sections each, the matter of Pāṇini's first two chapters being distributed over the whole book. The Sūtras being derived from Pāṇini, the work is in no sense un-Pāṇinian except in the fact that it rearranges the rules, occasionally simplifies their wording, reduces and modifies the Pratyāhāras, makes some changes

op. cit. p. 362) he is expressly called *Dvaipa.*—For Chandradvīpa, see *supra* p. 18. P. C. Bagchi (introd. to *Kaula-jñāna-nirṇaya,* pp. 29-34) is inclined to think that Chandradvīpa signifies the entire coast-line, but if it is taken to refer to a particular locality, he would identify it with the island of Sandwip in the district of Noakhali. There is no philological difficulty in deriving the word Sandwip from Chandradvīpa.

[1] Tāranātha tells us (p. 155) that Chandra's grammar superseded Chandrakīrti's *Samantabhadra,* a grammar composed in Ślokas, and made it disappear.

[2] The Tārā cult, to which Hiuen Tsang refers, must have been prevalent in the 6th century (see G. de Blonay, *Matériaux pour servir à l'histoire de la déesse Buddhique Tārā,* p. 17 f). Hirananda Sastri in *Origin and Cult of Tārā* (in Memoirs of the Arch. Survey of India, Calcutta 1925), thinks that the deity does not date further back than the 5th century. On Chandragomin's *Āryā-tārā-antarvali-vidhi,* see S. C. Vidyabhushan, Introd to (Sarvajñamitra's) Sragdharā-stotra in *Bauddha-stotra-saṁgraha* (Bibl. Ind. Calcutta 1908), p. xx f.

[3] Wint.-*Ges.* III. pp. 183, 399; Keith-*drama,* p. 168. The drama is known only in the Tibetan version in *Bstan-ḥgyur.* It is a Buddhist work dramatising the story of a certain Maṇichūḍa who handed over his wife and children to a Brahman as an act of supreme generosity. The author of this drama cannot be the same as the dramatist Chandaka or Chandraka, who is placed by Kalhaṇa under Tuñjina of Kashmir and who is quoted in the Anthologies.

[4] Ed. I. P. Minayeff in *Zapiski.* IV. pp. 29-52, with the Tibetan text added by A. Ivanowski. It is said to have been written to a prince Ratnakīrti to persuade him to forsake the world. The Sanskrit text has 114 verses in different metres, whose chief theme is the misery of existence, written in the artificial Kāvya style. It contains a verse which is ascribed to Chandragomin in Vallabhadeva's *Subhāshitāvali* (No. 3368): but the verse is missing in the Tibetan version. This verse is attributed to Chandra by I-tsing. See H. Wenzel in *JRAS.* 1889, p. 1133 f.

in the terminology, distributes the Saṁjñās and altogether omits, as most Buddhist writers do, the Vedic rules.[1] Its want of any striking originality or independence, however, must have proved fatal, and the system almost disappeared in the later history of Sanskrit grammar.

With regard to the next important work, considerable doubt has been raised about its authorship, but its place of origin is generally admitted. This is the philosophical work of 215 memorial verses, which is known as the *Gauḍapāda-kārikā*,[2] but which was probably entitled *Āgama-śāstra*. It is ascribed to Gauḍapāda, who is said to have been the pupil of Śuka and teacher's teacher (*Parama-guru*) of the great Śaṅkara, and whose name or more probably descriptive title indicates that he belonged to Gauḍa. Max Walleser[3] attempts to destroy the individuality of Gauḍapāda and establish that the *Kārikā* belongs to a Gauḍa school of Vedānta by adducing a passage from the *Naishkarmya-siddhi* (IV. 41 4)[4] of Sureśvara, where two stanzas from the *Gauḍapāda-kārikā* and one from Śaṅkara's *Upadeśa-sāhasrī* are respectively mentioned as uttered by the Gauḍas and Drāviḍas. But since the latter reference (the plural being honorific) is to an individual author, Śaṅkara, who was Sureśvara's own teacher, we should normally expect that the other reference is also similarly to an individual author. The consideration of the problem falls outside our scope; but we may state that even if the authenticity of the tradition which connects Gauḍapāda with Śaṅkara is questioned,[5] there cannot be much doubt regarding the personality of the author who, also cited as

[1] In the matter of the Dhātu-pāṭha, Chandra agrees pretty closely with Pāṇini, classifying the roots similarly into ten groups; but within the classes he groups them according to the voices of verbs. Liebich points out the interesting fact that the Dhātu-pāṭha of the Kātantra is in reality that of the Chāndra system as modified by Durgasiṁha, the genuine Kātantra Dhātu-pāṭha being preserved only in Tibetan and lost in Sanskrit. The Uṇādi words are disposed of in three books by Chandra independently of Pāṇini, the suffixes being arranged according to their final letter, and the words being sometimes derived in a different way.

[2] Ed. *An. SS.*, No. 10, Poona 1911.

[3] In *Der altere Vedānta*, pp. 1, 6, 11. On this question see L. D. Barnett in *JRAS*. 1910, p. 1361 f; L. de la Vallée Poussin in *JRAS*. 1910, p. 134; H. Jacobi in *JAOS*. 1913, p. 52 note; Keith in *JRAS*. 1916, p. 377 f; S. K. Belvalkar in *Bhandarkar Comm. Volume* (Poona 1917) p. 171 f, in *ABORI*. v. 133 f, in his *Hist. of Ind. Philosophy*, II. 96-7 and in his *Basu Mallik Lectures on Vedānta*, Pt i, p. 182 f.

[4] Ed. *BSS*. (2nd. ed.), pp. 192-93.

[5] In his *Brahma-sūtra-bhāshya* (i. 4. 14=iii. 15; ii. 1. 9=i. 16), Śaṅkara quotes the *Kārikā* without the mention of Gauḍapāda's name, referring to him as *Sampradāya-vid* or *Vedārtha-sampradāya-vid* Āchārya. On the other hand, in

Gauḍāchārya, probably belonged to Gauḍa. It is not necessary here to enter into the question of the relation of the *Kārikā* to the *Māṇḍūkya Upanishad*,[1] nor into its philosophical doctrine,[2] which is a curious blend of pre-Śaṅkara Vedānta and Mādhyamika Śūnyavāda;[3] but since the work is said to have been actually quoted by some early commentators of the Mādhyamika school (c. 750 A.D.),[4] its comparative antiquity is established. The work consists of four parts of varying length, called respectively Āgama (29 verses), Vaitathya (38 verses), Advaita (48 verses) and Alāta-śānti (100 verses). It has been shown that the fourth section, in particular, the authorship of which has sometimes been questioned, is indebted to early Buddhistic philosophical works for its words, arguments and images;[5] and, considering the early prevalence of Buddhistic schools in Bengal this is not surprising. Gauḍapāda is also credited with the authorship of commentaries, respectively on Īśvarakṛishṇa's *Sāṁkhya-kārikā*[6] and the *Uttara-gītā*;[7] but while the latter work is of no great merit, the former appears to be largely based either upon the earlier *Māṭhara-vṛitti* or upon an

the commentary on the *Śvetāśvatara Upanishad* (ed. *An. SS.* i. 8, p. 30), Śaṅkara's authorship of which is not beyond question, the commentator cites his predecessor as Śuka-śishya Gauḍapādāchārya. Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Kārikā* itself has not been accepted as authentic (see V. Bhattacharya, *AJV.* III. Pt. II. 102 ff.; M. Walleser, *op. cit.* p. 55, f.n.).

[1] See V. Bhattacharya (who contends that the Upanishad is based on the *Kārikā*) in *PTOC.* II. 439 ff. and in *IHQ.* 1925, pp. 119 ff. and 295 ff; A. Venkatasubbiah (who thinks that the work consisted of more than four sections) in *IA.* LXII 181 ff. and in *IHQ.* 1935, pp. 783 ff., and S. K. Belvalkar in the works cited.

[2] For which see V. S. Sukthankar in *WZKM.* XXII. (1908), pp. 137 ff; H. Jacobi, *JAOS.* XXXIII (1913), pp. 52-54; DG.-*Phil.* I. 423 ff; R.-*Phil.* II. 452 ff.

[3] Radhakrishnan would sum up by saying that the *Kārikā* is "an attempt to combine the whole negative logic of the Mādhyamika with the positive idealism of the Upanishads" (*Ibid.* p. 465).

[4] So in Belv.-*Phil.* II. 96 (no reference) and Belv.-*Lect.* (Śāntarakshita and his commentator Kamalaśīla are mentioned. but no references are given).

[5] See L. de la Vallée Poussin, *loc. cit*; H. Jacobi, *loc. cit.*; discussed in detail by V. Bhattacharya in the works cited above. The influence is so great that DG.-*Phil.*, *op. cit.* p. 423, thinks that the author "was possibly a Buddhist." Keith-*Lit.* p. 476 admits Buddhist influence, but believes that the ideas were developed independently by an Aupanishada school.

[6] Ed. B. Tripathi in *Ben. SS.*, No. 9; trs. H. H. Wilson, *OTF.*, along with Colebrooke's trans. of the Kārikās; also trs. Satish Chandra Banerji, Fasc. i (all pub.), Calcutta 1898.—This work was probably known to Alberuni (see Sachau, *Alberuni's India*, I. 132; II. 266 ff.) as the work of a Gauḍa hermit.

[7] *VP.* 1910. The Dacca University MSS. of the work (Nos. 4504, 558e) give somewhat different readings.

unknown source which Māṭhara also utilised.[1] The hypothesis of two Gauḍapādas has also been advanced; but there is nothing in these two commentaries which militates against their traditional ascription to the author of the *Kārikā*.

Even though the literary remains of Bengal, described above, in the centuries preceding the advent of the Pāla dynasty, are insufficient and uncertain, we come, for the first time, in the beginning of the 7th century, across distinct references to the literary diction of the Gauḍas. Bāṇabhaṭṭa informs us in a well known verse:[2]

> In the North there is mostly play upon words (Ślesha),[3] in the West it is only the sense (Artha), in the South it is poetical fancy (Utprekshā), in the Gauḍas there is pomp of syllables (Akshara-ḍambara).

This apparently disparaging observation regarding the Gauḍas is explained by the suggestion[4] that it reflects a partisan spirit on the part of the court-poet of Harshavardhana, which is also clear from the feeling which he displays towards his patron's rival, the unnamed but much maligned king of Gauḍa. But the explanation does not become convincing when we consider that in this verse Bāṇabhaṭṭa is stating that poets of the four quarters of India respectively affect only a few peculiar literary excellences, and not all, some putting stress on sound, some on sense, some on both, while others indulge in a play of fancy; for in the next verse he regrets that it is difficult to find in one place all that are, in his opinion, desirable excellences of the Kāvya. The position has been often misunderstood, but the view we have taken will be clear if we consider the references to the Gauḍa Mārga or Gauḍī Rīti, which are found in the polemic poetics of Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin, and which show that at least in the 7th and 8th centuries[5] the Gauḍī Rīti in its proper form was regarded as a distinct and original achievement in the sphere of literary diction. Along with the Vaidarbhī, the Gauḍī figures as one of the two most important modes of poetic expression, although the theorists are not agreed on the question of their relative superiority. While Bhāmaha (i. 31-32) is impatient with the conventional distinction and preference of the Vaidarbhī and declares his

[1] R. Garbe, *Sāṁkhya Philisophie* (2nd ed.); Belvalkar in *Bhandarkar Comm. Volume*, p. 171 and Belv.-*Lect.* p. 188; Keith, *Sāṁkhya System*, pp. 69-70.

[2] *HC.* introductory verse 7.

[3] See V. Raghavan in *Kuppuswami Sastri Comm. Vol.*, pp. 89-90 and *NIA.* I. 214.

[4] S. P. Bhattacharya, *The Gauḍī Rīti in Theory and Practice* (*IHQ.* 1927, p. 378).

[5] On the dates of Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin see De-*Poetics*, I. 48 f, 62 f.

opinion that in its proper form the Gauḍīya diction is even superior, Daṇḍin shows a decided partiality for the Vaidarbha Mārga and a mild aversion to the Gauḍa. But taking the Vaidarbhī as the standard, in which are to be found the essential poetical excellences of a good diction, Daṇḍin believes that the Gauḍī is an easily distinguishable (*prasphuṭāntara*) mode of expression, which, however, often presents a different aspect,[1] the conception of the Gauḍas about the essentials of a diction being apparently different from that of the Vaidarbhas. The opinion of the theorists, therefore, seems to be that the ideals of composition differed fundamentally in these two types of literary production, the Vaidarbhī demanding the correct and classical manner and the Gauḍī preferring the fervid and the grandiose. Daṇḍin makes it clear that the Gauḍas thereby often lose themselves in bombast and prolixity. If Bāṇabhaṭṭa singles out verbal bombast (*akshara-ḍambara*) in the Gauḍas, Daṇḍin likewise speaks of a kind of 'mental bombast' and cumbrous ornamentation when he uses the terms *artha-ḍambara* and *alaṁkāra-ḍambara* in this connexion. Even if their personal preference betrayed disapproval, they had still to take the mode of the Gauḍas into account, presumably because it had attained a commendable position and found favour in an equal degree with a class of writers and readers. It seems, therefore, that even long before Bāṇabhaṭṭa and Daṇḍin. the Gauḍas exhibited a distinctive literary diction of their own,[2] which, side by side with the widely accepted Vaidarbhī, had an established tradition incapable of being completely ignored. Just as Bengal strove politically in these centuries against the constant aggression of Magadha, Thanesvar and Kashmir to maintain its independence, it attempted in the literary sphere to withstand the domination of the almost universally accepted Vaidarbha mode of expression and succeeded in establishing its originality.

[1] Daṇḍin uses the term *viparyaya,* which does not mean *vaiparītya* or contrariety (as the *Hṛidayaṅgama* commentary takes it), but *anyathātva* or divergence. On this see *IHQ*. cited above, and Prakash Ch. Lahiri in *IHQ*. vii. (1931), p. 59 f.

[2] In the absence of proper data it is impossible to determine when the distinction between Vaidarbha and Gauḍa modes was first recognised. H. Jacobi (*Māhārāshṭrī,* p xvi f) suggests that the simpler Vaidarbha style was a reaction against the older and more elaborate Gauḍa style and came into existence probably in the 3rd century A.D. It is possible to argue, on the contrary, that the Gauḍa style, which asserts itself more and more in the later Kāvya, was itself a symbol of further development, exhibiting a tendency to greater elaboration. Both the standpoints ignore the possibility of the two styles developing concurrently as rival modes. The controversy of the rhetoricians makes it probable that both the Rītis developed side by side and entered into a competetion for mastery.—Bharata in his *Nāṭya-śāstra* (ed. Grosset, vi. 26) speaks of four dramatic modes or

These references are important in our literary history because they supply undeniable evidence that by the 7th and 8th centuries there must have grown up in Bengal a Sanskrit culture which attained such importance as necessitated the recognition of its characteristic method of expression. Apart from the lucubrations of Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin, Vāmana in the 9th century expressly states[1] that the discussion is not academic, but that the names of the recognised literary dictions were derived from the fact that the particular diction was prevalent in the particular locality.[2] It is probable, therefore, that the theory of diction arose, even before Daṇḍin and Vāmana who tacitly accept it, from an empirical analysis of the prevailing peculiarities of literary expression in different localities. This would furnish enough ground for the inference of a lost Gauḍa literature, which received recognition from the theorists, but over the merits of which they entertained an honest difference of opinion. In the following centuries, however, the much criticised Gauḍī Rīti must have overstepped its geographical limits; and, having been found even in non-Gauḍa works, it became in later Poetics a generic name for a particular kind of pompous diction, abounding in alliteration and long compounds; and as such, it decidedly declined in the favour of the theorists.[3]

When we come to the 10th and 11th centuries, the evidence becomes more definite that not only Sanskrit culture but also Sanskrit literature, both Brahmanical and Buddhistic, flourished in Bengal, although their contribution is still not sufficiently extensive nor outstanding. We have a larger number of more elaborate inscriptional panegyrics in Sanskrit, from the 9th century A.D., which are creditable compositions; but they display the ordinary characteristics of North Indian Praśastis of a similar nature, and do not

Pravṛittis, namely, Āvantī, Pañchāla-madhyamā, Dākshiṇātyā and Oḍra-Māgadhī. the last of which is expressly stated to have been employed in the eastern provinces, including Aṅga, Vaṅga, Pauṇḍra and Nepāla (xiv. 45-47), there being no special Gauḍī Pravṛitti.

1 *Kāvyālaṁkāra-sūtra-vṛitti* i. 2. 10.

2 So also Kuntaka (end of the 10th century) in his *Vakrokti-jīvita* (ed. S. K. De), 2nd ed., p. 45.

3 It is curious that at the end of the 10th century Rājaśekhara, who recognises but does not appear to show much admiration for the composition of the Gaudas in his *Kāvya-mīmāṁsā*, makes Māgadhī take the place of the Gauḍī in the enumeration of the Rītis in his *Karpūra-mañjarī* (i. 1); while Bhoja in the 11th century follows him in mentioning the Māgadhī, along with Gauḍī, although he regards the former as a Khaṇḍa-rīti. But the Māgadhī as a separate Rīti did not have much recognition; it came into existence through the scholastic zeal for distinctions displayed by later writers, which led to a constant multiplication of the number of literary modes of expression.

call for special remarks as literary productions. Some of these epigraphic records, however, give us interesting glimpses into the assiduous culture of Sanskrit by persons who were not professional scholars or men of letters, but highly placed officials and politicians. The Bādāl Pillar inscription of the time of Nārāyaṇapāla,[1] for instance, gives us a vivid account of the scholarly attainments of one of the minister families of the Pāla kings, which receives special commendation for its knowledge of Vedic literature. In this family Darbhapāṇi, who was the minister of Devapāla, and his grandson Kedāramiśra, who also held the same position, are said to have mastered the four Vidyās; while Kedāra's son Guravamiśra acquired proficiency in the Vedas, Āgamas, Nīti, and Jyotisha, and distinguished himself by his exposition of the Vedic works. The Bāngarh copper-plate Grant[2] of Mahīpāla I mentions the study of *Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā,* Mīmāṁsā, Vyākaraṇa and Tarka, while proficiency in Veda, Vedānta and Pramāṇa, and in the Kauthuma recension of the Sāmaveda, is referred to in the Monghyr copper-plate[3] of Devapāla, Amgachhi copper-plate of Vigrahapāla[4] and the Manahali copper-plate[5] of Madanapāla. The colophon to the *Hari-charita* Kāvya of Chaturbhuja mentions the Varendra Brahmans of the time of Dharmapāla as experts in Śruti, Smṛiti, Purāṇa, Vyākaraṇa and Kāvya. Similar references occur in other inscriptions of the Pālas and those of contemporary dynasties. The most interesting record, however, of the political, literary and scholarly attainments of a striking personality is to be found in the Praśasti[6] of Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva of Bālavalabhī, who flourished under Harivarman.

These indications of cultural activity, however, are not fully borne out by the actual literary remains of this period; for, apart from Buddhistic Tantric writings, the literature which has survived is scanty and inadequate: In the sphere of poetical and dramatic literature, however, some of the well-known classical works have been claimed for Bengal, but the proofs adduced in support of such claims are slender and uncertain.[7] The assumption,[8] for instance,

[1] *GL,* 71. [2] *Ibid.* 91. [3] *Ibid.* 39.
[4] *EI.* XV. 295. [5] *GL.* 147.
[6] In the Bhuvanesvara inscription, *EI.* VI. 203; *IB.* 32. For other inscriptional references to Sanskrit studies in Bengal see *HSL.* II. 207-14 (Calcutta B.E. 1339=1932 A.D.).
[7] Those who put forward such theories, without much justification, often forget that the onus of proof lies on them who make these assumptions and that considerations of personal bias or local patriotism should not prompt or control the evidence.
[8] *JASB.* 1930, pp. 241-45.

that the *Mudrā-rākshasa* of Viśākhadatta is a Bengal work is purely gratuitous and hypothetical. A Bengal tradition of doubtful value, again, would credit Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa, author of the *Veṇī-saṁhāra,* to Bengal; for he is alleged to be one of the five Kanauj Brāhmaṇas brought to Bengal by Ādiśūra. Unless corroborated by independent evidence these traditions of Bengal match-makers and panegyrists of big families are hardly of much value for historical purposes, particularly for events of comparatively early times.[1] There is no satisfactory evidence, again, to identify Murāri, son of Vardhamānāṅka of the Maudgalya-*gotra* and Tantumatī, and author of the *Anargha-rāghava,*[2] with the Murāri, who is given as one of the progenitors of the Bengal Vaidika Brahmans. Equally uncertain is the similar tradition which connects Śrīharsha, son of Śrīhīra and Māmalla-devī and author of the *Naishadha-charita,*[3] with Bengal; for Śrīharsha of the Bengal genealogists is described as the son of Medhātithi or Tithimedhā! This last claim has been argued[4] at some length, but the evidence is not conclusive. Some plausibility is afforded by the reference (vii. 110) to a Praśasti which the poet

[1] Cf. Ch. XV. Appendix I.

[2] Of Murāri's place of origin and activity nothing is known; but he mentions Māhishmatī as the seat of the Kalachuris. See Keith-*Drama*, pp. 225-26.

[3] There are numerous editions with the different commentaries: (1) with the *Prakāśa* of Nārāyaṇa (*NSP*). (2) with the *Jīvātu* of Mallinātha, ed. Jīvānanda Vidyāsagar, 2 Vol., Calcutta 1875, 1876; also ed. in parts, Pts. I-II (cantos i-xii), Trichur 1924, 1926. (3) with the commentaries of Nārāyaṇa, Bharatamallika and Vaṁśīvadana (Cantos i-iii), ed. Nityasvarup Brahmachari Calcutta B.E. 1326 (=1920 A.D.). (4) The Bibl. Ind. ed. (Calcutta 1836, 1855), is in two parts; the first part contains cantos i-xi with Premachandra Tarkavāgīśa's commentary, and the second part, edited by E. Roer, contains cantos xii-xxii, with Nārāyaṇa's commentary. The English translation by K. K. Handiqui (Lahore 1934) gives notes and extracts from several published commentaries.

[4] *SBS.* III. pp. 159-94. See also *IC.* II. 576-79. Śrīharsha's Bengal origin need not follow, as Nārāyaṇa in his commentary thinks, from his use (xiv. 51) of the word *ulūlu* as an auspicious sound made by women on festive occasions. Apart from the fact that the word appears to be as old as the *Chhāndogya Upanishad* (iii. 19. 3), K. K. Handiqui (*op. cit.* pp. 541-42) has shown that it is not an exclusively Bengali custom, being found in writers who had no connection with Bengal, especially in some Jaina writers of Western India. Murāri uses the word in connection with Sītā's marriage (iii. 55), but his Maithili commentator, Ruchipati Upādhyāya, explains it as a South Indian custom. The Southerner Mallinātha, on the other hand, believes it to be a Northern custom! Similar remarks apply to the reference (xv. 45) to the custom of wearing conch-bangle, which is also mentioned in the *Mahābhārata* (Virāṭa xi. 1) and the *Kādambarī.* The argument based on the Gauḍī Rīti does not carry much weight; but more relevant if not definitely conclusive, is the indiscriminate use in alliteration and chiming of the three sibilants, the two nasals *n*, *ṇ*, *ba* and *va*, *ya* and *ja* as sounds of equivalent value. Rhetoricians, however, permit such interchange in verbal figures.

is said to have composed for some unnamed king of Gauḍa, but we also learn that he was patronised by the king of Kānyakubja (xxii. 26) and that his work received the approval of the Kashmirian scholars (xvi. 131).[1] The king of Kānyakubja has been identified with Jayachandra of Kanauj, who flourished in the second half of the 12th century.[2] Śrīharsha claims originality for his work (viii. 109) as that of "a traveller on a path unseen by the race of poets"; but as a poem his work displays more learning than real poetry. An elaborate and pedantic production of twenty-two cantos, it spins[3] out and embellishes only a part of the simple and attractive epic story of Nala and Damayantī out of all recognition; but the concern of the undoubtedly talented master of diction and metre is not so much with the poetic possibilities of the theme, as with the display of his own skill and learning so characteristic of later decadent poets. The work has been regarded as one of the five

[1] It is curious that this reference to the appreciation by Kashmirian scholars is found, not in its proper place at the end of the work but at the end of canto xvi. It is also puzzling that both the poem *Naishadha-charita* and the philosophical treatise *Khaṇḍana-khaṇḍa-khādya* appear to refer to each other, leading to the curious conclusion of their simultaneous production by the same author. The genuineness of the brief autobiographical verses, which contain these references and which are placed, in a scattered way, at the end of each canto, is therefore, open to considerable doubt; but it is possible that they embody a tradition the value of which need not be entirely rejected even on the supposition of their being spurious. We learn from these verses that Śrīharsha was also the author of a Champū called *Nava-sāhasāṅka-charita* (xxii. 22), a *Sthairya-vichāra-prakaraṇa* (iv. 123), an *Arṇava-varṇana* (ix. 160), a *Śiva-śakti-siddhi* (xviii. 154), a *Chhinda-praśasti* (xvii. 222) and a *Śrī-vijaya-praśasti* (v. 138). The punning reference to the *Khaṇḍana-khaṇḍa-khādya* is apparently justified by the express declaration (x. 137) of unrivalled labours in the science of logic, as well as by the philosophical digression in canto xvii. A late (and probably Bengal) commentator, Gopīnātha Āchārya, believes (R. L. Mitra, *Notices*, iv. 212) in his *Harsha-hṛidaya* commentary on the *Naishadha°* that the *Vijaya-praśasti* mentioned above is in praise of king Vijayasena of Bengal; but Chāṇḍu Paṇḍita and other commentators, as well as Rājaśekhara Sūri in his *Prabandha-chintāmaṇi* (1348 A.D.), make Śrīharsha a protégé of Jayachandra of Kanauj (*Supra*, p. 215).

[2] G. Bühler in *JBRAS*. 1871, p. 31 f; 1875, pp. 279-87. This date has been questioned, see R. P. Chanda in *IA*. XLII. 83 f, 286 f. Cf. D. R. Bhandarkar in *IA*. 1913, pp. 83-84; N. N. Dasgupta in *IC*. p. 576.

[3] The contents of cantos vi, vii, xv, xix-xxii, as well as the greater portion of xvii are matters not to be found in the epic. A whole canto of 109 verses is devoted to a description of the heroine's entire bodily charms, beginning from the top of the head to the toe of the feet! The panegyric of the Vaitālīya occupies the whole of canto xix (67 verses), while Damayantī's Svayaṁvara extends over five cantos. The poem ends with the married bliss of Nala and Damayantī. Poetic merits apart, the work is written for a learned audience, and its chief interest lies in the fact that it is in many ways a repository of traditional learning. For an estimate of the work, cf. Dr. S. K. De—*History of Sanskrit Literature* (Calcutta Univ.) pp. 325-30.

traditional Mahākāvyas and has been favoured by a section of learned Indian opinion,[1] but it would be an acquisition of dubious value to Bengal if its Bengal origin were finally proved.

The problem is more difficult with regard to the *Chaṇḍakauśika*[2] of Kshemīśvara on account of the meagreness and uncertainty of the data for a definite conclusion regarding its place of origin. The drama deals in five acts with the *Mārkaṇḍeya-purāṇa* legend of Hariśchandra and Viśvāmitra, but there is hardly anything distinctive in its style and treatment. The play works out the effect of the curse of the irascible sage Viśvāmitra upon the upright king Hariśchandra, who unwittingly offended him, and describes the loss of his kingdom, wife and child, and the ultimate restoration of everything to the satisfaction of all. There is some interest in the idea of trial of character by suffering, but the piling up of disasters as an atonement of what appears to be an innocent offence unnecessarily prolongs the agony, and the divine intervention at the end is dramatically too flat. The story lacks dramatic quality and improves very little by the poor execution and mediocre poetry of Kshemīśvara. A verse in the Prologue states that the work was composed and produced at the court of Mahīpāla. Haraprasāda Śāstrī[3] is inclined to identify the dramatist's patron with Mahīpāla of Bengal, chiefly on the ground that the king is said in the drama to have driven away the Karṇāṭakas, who, in Śāstrī's opinion, were the invading armies of Rājendra Choḷa I in 1023,[4] or the Karṇāṭas who came in the train of the Chedi kings at a later time. If this were so, then Kshemīśvara's place of activity would be Bengal; and it is noteworthy in this connection that the two oldest complete plam-leaf manuscripts of the drama,

[1] Making allowance for artificiality and dubious literary taste, there are, however, forceful passages, *e.g.*, the description of the personified vices in canto xvii, of the moon-rise in canto xxii, of the five Nalas in canto xiii, and the treatment of Nala's character in its emotional conflict in canto ix.

[2] Ed. Jaganmohan Tarkālaṁkār, Calcutta 1867; also ed. Jīvānanda Vidyāsagara, Calcutta 1884; ed. in litho MS. form, by Krishna Sastri, Gurjara Press, Bombay 1860. Trs. into German under the title *Kauśikas Zorn* by Ludwig Fritze, Leipzig 1883.—The name of the author is sometimes confused with the Kashmirian Kshemendra. Kshemīśvara, who designates himself as Ārya, does not mention the name of his father, but his grandfather is named Vijayaprakoshṭha.

[3] Sastri-*Cat.* VII. No. 5315; S. K. Aiyangar in *AJV.* II. 559 ff.; *PB.* 73; *BI.* I. 251-52; J. C. Ghosh in *IC.* II. 354-56; but see K. A. Nilakanta Sastri in *JOR.* VI. 191-98 and *IC.* II. 797-99.

[4] This is contested by S. K. Aiyangar, *op. cit.* pp. 559 f, to which R. D. Banerji replies in *JBORS.* XIV. 512 f. See Nilakanta Sastri in the articles cited above.

dated respectively in A.D. 1250 and 1387, are preserved in Nepal.[1] On the other hand, Pischel believes[2] Kshemīśvara's patron to be the Gurjara-Pratīhāra ruler Mahīpāla I of Mahodaya (=Kānyakubja) under whom Rājaśekhara wrote his *Bāla-bhārata* (i. 7) and whom Fleet[3] identifies with the Mahīpāla of the Asni inscription, dated in 917 A.D. Kshemīśvara's assertion of his patron's victory over the Karṇāṭas is explained as the courtier's version of the contest with the Rāshṭrakūṭa Indra III, who for his part claims victory over Mahodaya.[4] Kshemīśvara was also the author of another drama, *Naishadhānanda*,[5] which deals in seven acts with the story of Nala.

A similar uncertainly attaches to the *Kīchaka-vadha*[6] of Nītivarman which may have been composed in Bengal or in the adjoining territory of Kaliṅga.[7] It is a short artificial poem in five cantos (177 verses), which deals with the well-known episode of the Virāṭa-parvan of the *Mahābhārata*; but the simple and vigorous story of the epic is transformed into a pedantic means for the display of the author's skill and learning in the manipulation of the language, for the ingenious use of double meanings (*Ślesha*) and clever chimings (*Yamaka*). The work, however, is singular in the attempt it makes to include both *Ślesha* (canto iii) and *Yamaka*

[1] Now in the collection of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta (Sastri-*Cat.* Nos. 5315 and 5316). Other known, but comparatively modern, MSS. are noticed in the same Catalogue, as well as in the *Descriptive Cat.* of the Calcutta Sanskrit College, VI. nos. 222-23, pp. 134-5 (three MSS. in Devanāgarī), and in P. P. S. Śāstrī's Tanjore Catalogue, VIII, Srirangam 1930, pp. 3390-93=Burnell's *Classified Index*, III. 169 (three MSS.) ; *Descriptive Cat. of Govt. Collection in Bhandarkar O. R. Institute*, XIV. pp. 77-82 (five MSS. in Devanāgarī).

[2] *Goettingische gelehrte Anzeigen*, 1883, p. 1217 f.

[3] *IA.* XXVI. 175-78. For the identification of Mahīpāla cf. *supra* pp. 143-44.

[4] See Sten Konow, *Indische Drama*, p. 87 ; P. Peterson, *Second Report*, p. 63 ; R. G. Bhandarkar, *Report* 1897, p. xi ; Keith-*Drama*, p. 239.—The only Alaṅkāra work which cites the *Chaṇḍa-kauśika* is the *Sāhitya-darpaṇa*, which belongs probably to Orissa in the first half of the 15th century (See De-*Poetics*. I. 233 f.).

[5] MS. dated in 1611 A.D. noticed in Peterson, *Three Reports*, pp. 340-42, with extracts ; but no personal account of the author is found in the work.

[6] Ed. S. K. De, with the commentary of Janārdanasena and with extracts from the commentary of Sarvānanda-nāga, *DOT*. 1929.

[7] In two verses of doubtful interpretation (i. 21 ; i. 7), the author refers to his patron in connection with Kaliṅga either as a ruler or as a conqueror. A covert allusion appears to be made to this patron's name or designation in the word *vigraha* employed in the Yamaka, but considering the date of the work, an allusion to the Vigrahapālas of Bengal does not seem likely. For a discussion of this question see S. K. De's edition, pp. xii-xiv and 93-94, 98-99. The poem has been preserved in Bengali MSS. only, and all the known commentaries are of Bengal origin and indicate the currency of the poem in Bengal ; and there is nothing, excepting the verse i. 21 mentioned above, which connects it with Kaliṅga.

(cantos i-ii, iv-v) in its scope; and it is the only Kāvya, so far known, which fulfils the rhetorician's dictum about the Āśis-prelude. As an early example of this type of Sanskrit composition, it shows considerable talent; and it is no wonder that it is quoted by a large number of grammarians, rhetoricians and lexicographers. One of the earliest of such quotations is made by Nami-sādhu, who wrote his commentary on Rudraṭa's *Kāvyālaṅkāra* in 1069 A.D.[1] Nothing is known of the author, Nītivarman, except that he lived in the court of an otherwise unknown prince who might have ruled in Bengal or in Kaliṅga.

The only writer who can be definitely assigned to Bengal is Gauḍa Abhinanda, who is known to us from stray quotations of his verses in the Sanskrit Anthology of Śārṅgadhara;[2] but the question of his date and identity is not free from difficulty. He has been identified with Abhinanda, son of Jayanta and author of the *Kādambarī-kathā-sāra*[3] on the ground chiefly that the author of this metrical summary of Bāṇa's prose romance describes one of his ancestors as a Gauḍa; but the evidence is obviously not conclusive, and none of the anthology verses ascribed to Abhinanda or Gauḍa Abhinanda is traceable in this work.[4] There is, however, no chronological obstacle in the way of the proposed identification. The author of the °*Kathā-sāra* informs us that his fifth ancestor, Śaktisvāmin, flourished under Muktāpīḍa of the Karkoṭa dynasty of Kashmir towards the end of the 7th and the first half of the 8th century; and as the poet Abhinanda, son of Jayanta, is mentioned and quoted by the Kashmirian Abhinavagupta[5] towards the end

[1] For other early writers who quote this work, see S. K. De, introd. to the above edition.

[2] The *Śārṅgadhara-paddhati* (dated about 1363 A.D.) quotes twice (Nos. 1090, 3485, the former verse assigned to Śubhāṅga in the *Sadukti-karṇāmṛita* iv. 53) Gauḍa Abhinanda; but it also quotes an Abhinanda (Nos. 3763, 3917) without the descriptive title. An Abhinanda, and not Gauḍa Abhinanda, is quoted five times (Nos. 75, 130, 313, 319, 457) in the *Kavīndra-vachana*°, twenty-two times in the *Sadukti*°, six times in the *Sūkti-muktāvalī* of Jalhaṇa (of which two verses are traceable in the *Rāma-charita* ii. 98, 99) and once in the *Padyāvalī* (No. 149). Fragments of Abhinanda's verses are also quoted by Ujjvaladatta (on Uṇādi-sūtra i. 2, 48; ii 103; iv. 117), who refers to Abhinanda's description of the Vindhya Hills, and by Rāyamukuṭa (on Amara i. 1. 7; ii. 5. 4, 10). For a résumé of these passages see F. W. Thomas, *Kavīndra-vachana*°, pp. 20-22.

[3] Ed. Kāvyamālā, 11, *NSP*. 1899.

[4] For a discussion of the question see S. K. De, *Padyāvalī*, pp. 182-84.

[5] In the printed text (Kāvyamālā 25, Bombay 1911, p. 142) of Abhinavagupta's *Lochana*, the work is ascribed to Bhaṭṭa Jayantaka, but the India Office MS. (No. 1008 E 1135), which we consulted, assigns it to Abhinanda, son of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta. The Kashmirian Kshemendra in the 11th century also quotes Abhinanda and his °*Kathā-sāra* (in his *Suvṛitta-tilaka* iii. 6=°*Kathā-sāra* i. 16).

of 10th century, his date may be fixed at about the first half of the 9th century. The Abhinanda of the Anthologies could not have been of a much later date, having been quoted in the *Kavīndra-vachana-samuchchaya*[1] which cannot be assigned to a period later than the 10th century;[2] but it is not clear if this Abhinanda is identical with Gauḍa Abhinanda, who is cited (along with Abhinanda without the descriptive term Gauḍa) in the *Śārṅgadhara-paddhati*.[3]

Perhaps the only Kāvya of this period, the Bengal origin of which is known with certainty, is the *Rāmacharita*[4] of Sandhyākara-nandin, a curious but important work which belongs to the class of the so-called historical Kāvya. By means of constant play upon words (Ślesha) and splitting up of word-units in different ways, sustained throughout in its 220 Āryā verses, it gives in four chapters, after the manner of Kavirāja's *Rāghava-pāṇḍavīya,* the story of the *Rāmāyaṇa,* on the one hand, and the history of Rāmapāla of the Pāla dynasty, on the other. Each verse of the text has, therefore, a twofold application; but while the epic application is not difficult to make out, the local and contemporary allusions to Rāmapāla's exploits require elucidation. The Sanskrit commentary, which accompanies the text and which is not composed by the author himself,[5] explains the historical details, but unfortunately it ends abruptly with ii. 35. There is a Kavi-praśasti at the end of the work, which informs us that the author was the son of Prajāpati-nandin and grandson of Pināka-nandīn and belonged to Puṇḍra-vardhana in Varendra. Prajāpati was a Sāndhivigrahika of the royal court of Rāmapāla; and from the last verse of the text it is probable that the work was completed in the reign of Madanapāla, son of Rāmapāla and third in succession from him. As already

Kshemendra informs us (iii. 29) that Abhinanda was fond of the Anushṭubh metre, in which, for the most part, the °*Kathā-sāra* is composed.

[1] F. W. Thomas, *loc. cit.*, would identify this Abhinanda with the author of the °*Kathā-sāra.* as well as with Gauḍa Abhinanda, but no evidence is adduced.

[2] On Abhinanda see Aufrecht, *ZDMG.* xxvii. 6, 27; G. Bühler, *IA.* ii. 102-6; Peterson, *Fourth Report,* p. vii.

[3] These Abhinandas are probably to be distinguished from Abhinanda, the author of *Rāmacharita* (*GOS.* no. xlvi), who describes himself as the son of Śatānanda, and probobly also from Abhinava-paṇḍita, also a Gauḍa, whose *Yogavāsishṭha-saṁkshepa* in six Prakaraṇas and forty-six Sargas is noticed by Weber (Berlin Cat., No. 643) and who is described in the colophon to the work as *tarka-vādīśvara-sāhityāchārya-gauḍamaṇḍalālaṁkāra-śrīmat.* The problem of identity is complicated by the fact that the editor of the *Rāmacharita* makes a plausible case of its author having belonged to Gauḍa; but the identity of his patron Yuvarāja Hāravarsha, son of Vikramaśīla, with Devapāla, son of Dharmapāla, is, without further evidence, highly problematic. On this point see *supra* pp. 122-24.

[4] *Supra* p. 150, f.n. 1.

[5] *RC.*[2] p. vi.

noted above, the main theme of the poem is an account of a successful revolution in North Bengal, the murder of Mahīpāla II, occupation of Varendra by the rebels, and the restoration of Rāmapāla, Mahīpāla's youngest brother, to his paternal kingdom; but the story is continued even after the death of Rāmapāla and concludes with some allusions to Madanapāla's reign. As a chronicle of almost contemporary events, of which the author must have possessed a direct knowledge, it possesses considerable importance for reconstructing the lost history of this period. The author, calling himself Kalikāla-Vālmīki, tells us that he is not only a poet well versed in the art of rhetoric but also a great linguist. The skill he shows in the manipulation of words in a difficult metre, which, however, is possible only in an accommodating language like Sanskrit, is characteristic of later Sanskrit poets; but it certainly makes his work a marvel of verbal jugglery, especially as the author has to crowd within the limits of some two hundred verses a great deal of matter concerning simultaneously Raghupati Rāma and Gauḍādhipa Rāmapāla. The author claims that his Ślesha is not distressing (*akleśana*) ; it might not have been so to his contemporaries to whom the events narrated were probably familiar, but on account of this very limited and local interest it must have failed in its appeal to posterity and became forgotten. As an interesting example of the Ślesha-Kāvya, which includes both mythical and historical themes in its scope, it may be accepted as a singular *tour de force*, but the very purposive character of the work and its necessarily artificial form of expression make it a poetical curiosity rather than a real poem.

In the sphere of the technical Śāstras, on the other hand, we possess a fair amount of literature; but its total achievement cannot be regarded as very high. The epigraphic records tell us a great deal about Vedic[1] and philosophical studies in Bengal in this period, but no early work on Vedic literature has survived; and of the early philosophical speculations of Bengal we know nothing. The only philosophical work of this period, of which, however, Bengal may feel justly proud, is the well known *Nyāya-kandalī* commentary[2] of Śrīdhara Bhaṭṭa on Praśastapāda's *Padārtha-dharma-saṁgraha* Bhāshya on the Vaiśeshika-sūtra. From the concluding verses of

[1] On Vedic Studies in Bengal, see *HSL.* II. 202-226. From the inscriptional references it appears that all the four Vedas were studied, but the Vājasaneyi recension of the Yajurveda prevailed.

[2] *VSS.* No. 6; tra. Ganganath Jha in the *Pandit*, new Series, vols. 25-34; reprinted E. J. Lazarus, Benares 1916. Large sections of Śrīdhara's work have been translated into English by B. Faddegon in his *Vaiśeśika Systems*, Amsterdam 1918.

this work we learn that Śrīdhara was the son of Baladeva and Abbokā (*v. l.* Abhrokā, Ambhokā, Achchhokā) and belonged to Bhūriśreshṭhi in Dakshiṇa-Rāḍhā,[1] which has been identified with the village of Bhursut, near Burdwan. The work was written at the instance of one Pāṇḍudāsa, and is dated in Śaka 913 (or 910)[2] which is equivalent to 991 (or 988) A.D. From references in the work itself it appears that Śrīdhara also wrote *Advaya-siddhi* (p. 5), *Tattva-saṁvādinī* (p. 82), *Tattva-prabodha* (p. 146) and a *Saṁgraha-ṭīkā*[3] (p. 159); but none of these works, which are concerned apparently with Vedānta and Mīmāṁsā, has come down to us. It falls outside our scope to enter into the philosophical views of Śrīdhara, but the work is important for having placed for the first time a theistic interpretation on the Nyāya-Vaiśeshika.[4] It is curious, however, that this work found little favour in the country of its origin, and the two best known commentaries on it are respectively written by the Maithila Padmanābha and the Jaina Rājaśekhara.

The tradition of Chandragomin is supposed to have been maintained in Bengal by two well known Buddhist grammarians,

[1] The verse states that in addition to pious and learned Brahmans many Śreshṭhins lived there (*bhūriśreshṭhi* [v.l. *srishṭi*]-*janāśraya*). It is probably the same as Bhūriśreshṭhika in Rāḍhā mentioned by Krishṇamiśra in his *Prabodha-chandrodaya* (ii. 7) as the seat of proud Brahmans.

[2] The printed text reads: *tryadhika-daśottara-nava-śata-śākābde*, which is also the reading of Bühler's MS. (*Kashmir Report*, p. 76, and Appendix p. cxliv); but *adhika-daśottara*, which is perhaps a mislection, is found in some MSS, noticed by R. G. Bhandarkar (*Report 1883-84*, p. 314) and R. L. Mitra (*Notices*, VIII. 45, No. 2589; also X. 287, No. 4186).

[3] Kavirāj (III. 115, note) believes that the *Saṁgraha-ṭīkā* was not an independent work but referred to the *Nyāya-kandalī* itself, which was a *ṭīkā* on the *Padārtha-dharma-saṁgraha* of Praśastapāda; but the reference in the text does not appear to bear out his conjecture.

[4] Śrīdhara's famous contemporary, Udayana, who date his *Lakshaṇāvalī* in Śaka 906 (=984 A.D.) and who is the author also of a sub-commentary, entitled *Kiraṇāvalī*, on Praśastapāda's *Bhāshya*, as well as of two independent polemical works *Kusumāñjali* and *Ātma-tattva-viveka*, is sometimes connected with Bengal by a tradition which associates him with the Bhāduri Brahmans of North Bengal. But the unreliability of the tradition is indicated by Udayana's disparaging remarks about the Gauḍa Mīmāṁsaka who, in his opinion, lacked a true knowledge of the Vedic texts. The reference may be to a school or to an individual; but Varadarāja in his *Kusumāñjali-bodhinī* commentary (ed. Sarasvatī Bhavana Texts, No. 4, Benares 1922, p. 123) explains this reference as a pointed allusion to the Pañjikā-kāra. The identification of this Pañjikā-kāra with Śālikanātha, author of *Prakaraṇa-pañjikā* (ed. Benares 1903-4) and a direct pupil of Prabhākara, is plausible but unproved. It is noteworthy that much later (*c.* 13th century) Gaṅgeśa Upādhyāya refers to the Gauḍa Mīmāṁsaka in almost identical terms in his *Tattva-chintāmaṇi* (ed. Bibl. Ind., Śabda-Pramāṇa p. 88). See Chintabaran Chakravarti in *IA.* 1929, p. 202 f.

Jinendrabuddhi and Maitreya-rakshita; but the place of activity of these two authors cannot be definitely determined.[1] Jinendrabuddhi, who styles himself Bodhisattva-deśīyāchārya, was the author of an extensive commentary entitled °*Vivaraṇa-pañjikā* (commonly cited as the *Nyāsa*),[2] on the *Kāśikā*; while Maitreya-rakshita composed *Tantra-pradīpa* commentary[3] on Jinendrabuddhi's work, as well as *Dhātu-pradīpa*,[4] which professes to follow Bhīmasena's recension of the *Dhātu-pāṭha*.[5] The conjecture that Vimalamati, author of the *Bhāga-vṛitti*, belonged to Bengal, is too fanciful to require serious consideration.[6] The fact that these grammatical treatises were popular in Bengal furnishes an argument of uncertain value; for Bengal had admittedly been the ultimate place of refuge of most major and minor systems of Sanskrit grammar, including the Kātantra, the Mugdha-bodha, the Saṃkshipta-sāra and the Sārasvata. Of lexical writers, we know nothing about the date and identity of Subhūtichandra, the Tibetan version of whose commentary (called *Kāmadhenu*) on the *Amara-kośa* exists in *Bstan-ḥgyur*[7] and

[1] D. C. Bhattacharya (*Pāṇinian Studies in Bengal* in *AJV*. I. Pt. i, p. 189 f) suspects the Bengal origin of these writers from the fact that all the commentaries on the Nyāsa, for instance, are by Bengal writers. S. C. Chakravarti in the works cited below appears to be of the same opinion. The extraordinary argument (D. C. Bhattacharya, *ibid*. p. 201), however, that Maitreya was the title and Rakshita the real name, and that a clan of a Varendra Brahmans is called Maitra or Maitreya today requires no serious consideration; for one might as well argue that Rakshita being the cognomen of some Rāḍhīya Kāyasthas at the present time, our author was a Bengal Kāyastha! The argument from modern cognomen is unwarranted and hasty. As a Buddhist writer, the name Maitreya-rakshita is quite intelligible by itself.

[2] Ed. Srish Chandra Chakravarti, in 3 vols., Rajshahi 1913-25. This work is to be distinguished from the *Anu-nyāsa*, a rival commentary by Indu or Indumitra (*IHQ*. 1931, p. 418), who is probably earlier than Maitreya-rakshita but who need not be assumed gratuitously to have belonged to Bengal.

[3] On this work see S. C. Chakravarti in the works cited, and D. C. Bhattacharya, *op. cit*. A fragmentary MS. is noticed in Mitra, *Notices*, vi. 140, No. 2076, and another incomplete MS. is said to exist in Varendra Research Society, Rajshahi. It is referred to in the author's *Dhātu-pradīpa*; and the author is quoted by a series of grammarians and lexicographers (Purushottama, Ujjvaladatta, Rāyamukuṭa, Bhaṭṭoji Dīkshita, Sarvānanda, Śaraṇadeva, etc.), Sarvānanda (1160 A.D.) being the earliest known writer to cite Maitreya-rakshita.

[4] Ed. Srish Chandra Chakravarti, Rajshahi 1919; Egg.-*Cat*. 182, No. 687/434a.

[5] Referred to in the opening verse.

[6] Assigned to a period between 850 and 1050 A.D. (See *IHQ*. 1931, pp. 413-18).

[7] Ed. Satis Chandra Vidyabhusan, Bibl. Ind., Calcutta 1912, (only one fasc. published of the Tibetan text). Cf. Cordier, *op. cit*. iii. 465; Th. Zachariae, *Die indische Woeterbuecher, GIPA*. Strassburg 1897, p. 21. According to Vidya-

who is sometimes assigned[1] to Bengal. He is quoted four times by Rāyamukuṭa and once by Śaraṇadeva.[2]

Among exponents of technical Śāstras the medical writers of Bengal deserve mention. The well known medical authority, Mādhava,[3] son of Indukara[4] and author of a learned work on pathology and diagnosis, entitled *Rug-viniśchaya*[5] (or simply *Nidāna*), is assigned[6] to this period, but whether Bengal can really claim him is doubtful.[7] It is true that mediaeval Bengal developed

bhusan (p. IX), Subhūtichandra is also cited by Liṅgabhaṭṭa, another commentator on Amara.

[1] *IC.* II. 261. [2] Ed. Trivandrum 1909, p. 82.

[3] In the work itself the name is given as Mādhava, and not as Mādhavakara, which is found only in some commentaries; and it is doubtful whether *-kara* was at all a cognomen; for his father's name Indukara is intelligible in itself and need not lead to any supposition of Bengal origin. Cf. the name Bhānukara, author of *Rasika-jīvana* who never belonged to Bengal. The evidence of Arabic sources (Jolly, *Medicin,* p. 7) points to the 9th century as the date of Mādhava.

[4] There is no evidence for presuming that Indukara was a medical writer and identifying him with Indu (where *-kara* is dropped) who is cited by Kshīrasvāmin in his comment on the Vanaushadhivarga of the *Amara-kośa.* He wrote, as the quotations show, on the topic of Vanaushadhi, but the supposition (*IC.* II. 153-54) that his work was named *Nighaṇṭu* is entirely gratuitous. Indu is by no means an uncommon Indian name, and hazarding of guesses of identity of authors having similar names is hardly of any use.

[5] The work has been printed very often in India. Ed. with the *Madhukośa-vyākhyā* of Vijayarakshita and his pupil Śrīkaṇṭhadatta and with *Ātaṅka-darpaṇa-ṭīkā* of Vāchaspati-vaidya, by J. T. Acharya, *NSP.* Bombay 1932. Vijaya-rakshita commented on i-xxxii; Śrīkaṇṭhadatta on the rest. Eight commentaries on this work are listed by Aufrecht.

[6] *IC.* III. 153-55; but see S. K. De, *ibid.* IV. 273-76.

[7] The *Chikitsā* (R. L. Mitra, *Bikaner Catalogue,* No. 1413, pp. 647-48) of Mādhava is not, as suggested in *IC. loc. cit.*, a separate work, but is either identical with *Rug-viniśchaya* or represents a version of it. The two opening verses quoted by Mitra are nothing but verses 3 and 4 of the *Rug-viniśchaya,* while the only concluding verse cited, which is too corrupt for identification, deals apparently with Visha-roga-nidāna, which forms the subject-matter of one of the concluding chapters of the *Rug-viniśchaya.* All the available MSS. of the small work on Dietics, called *Kūṭa-mudgara,* are in Devanāgarī, and there is nothing to identify its author Mādhava with our Mādhava, who is probably also to be distinguished from the Mādhava or Mādhavas, who wrote *Āyurveda-rasa-śāstra* (*B. GS.-Cat.* IV. 218), *Rasa-kaumudī* (Mitra, *Notices,* IV. p. 178, No. 1616), *Bhāva-svabhāva* (Bühler, *op. cit.* p. 230; see Aufrecht, *Catalogus Cat.* II. p. 93; III. p. 89), and *Mugdha-bodha* (Eggeling, *op. cit.*, v. p. 943, No. 2680/807). The only other work which can possibly be assigned to our Mādhava, son of Indukara, is the *Paryāya-ratnamālā,* noticed by R. L. Mitra, *Notices,* IX. 234, No. 3150; but here, again, there is a great deal of uncertainty with regard to the work itself. In Mitra's description (*Notices,* I. 111, No. 207) of another MS. of the same work, the name of the author is given as Rājavallabha. The India Office MS. (Eggeling, *op. cit.*, v. 976, no. 2740/1511c) omits the name of the author, and ends differently. On

peculiar names, surnames and titles, but arguments based chiefly on the cognomen *-kara,* which, however, is not found attached to Mādhava's name in any of his known works, as well as on the extensive use of his works in Bengal, are hardly conclusive. It is, however, beyond doubt that Chakrapāṇidatta, the well known commentator on Charaka and Suśruta, belonged to Bengal. In his compendium of therapy, entitled *Chikitsā-saṁgraha,*[1] he informs us that his father Nārāyaṇa was an officer (*Pātra*) and superintendent of the culinary department (*Rasavatyadhikārin*) of the king of Gauḍa, that he was a Kulīna of the Lodhravali family[2] and that his brother Bhānu was an Antaraṅga or a learned physician of good family.[3] The commentator Śivadāsasena Yaśodhara, a Bengal writer, who belonged to the 16th century,[4] explains that the king of Gauḍa was Nayapāla. If this is so, Chakrapāṇidatta should be placed in the middle of the 11th century. Besides older authorities the work professes to draw upon the *Siddha-yoga* of Vṛinda,[5] which in its turn follows the order of diseases and treatment of Mādhava's *Rug-viniśchaya.* Besides being an authoritative work on the subject, it possesses importance in the history of Indian medicine for marking an advance in the direction of metallic preparations[6] which had

Mādhava see A. F. R. Hoernle, *Medicine of Ancient India* (Oxford 1907), p. 13f; J. Jolly, *Medicin, GIPA.* Strassburg 1901), pp. 6-7, where his relation to Vṛinda, author of the *Siddha-yoga,* is also briefly discussed. The suggestion that Vṛinda is the true name of the author of the *Rug-viniśchaya* (Hoernle in *JRAS.* 1906, p. 288f; 1908, p. 998) is groundless and unproved. The *Siddha-yoga* is sometimes called *Vṛinda-mādhava* probably because Vṛinda makes a very large use of Mādhava's work in writing his own. The real names of the work and the author as given in most MSS. are respectively *Siddha-yoga* and Vṛinda (See Eggeling, *op. cit.* p. 937; Aufrecht, *Bod. Cat.,* p. 315b; Peterson. *Fourth Report,* p. 399; Kiel.-*Cat.* p. 222, etc.).

1 Ed. Jīvānanda Vidyāsāgar, Calcutta 1888; but it is printed very often.

2 Explained by Śivadāsa as the Lodhravali branch of the Datta family. Tradition locates his birth-place in the district of Birbhum. Haraprasād Śāstrī in his *School History of India* (Calcutta 1896) gives 1060 A.D. as the definite date of Chakrapāṇi, which has been repeated by most writers (Jolly, *op. cit.,* p. 6 and in *ZDMG.* LIII, 378; Hoernle, *op. cit.* pp. 12, 16); but we have no proof for this exact date.

3 *Vidyā-kula-saṁpanno bhishag antaraṅgaḥ* (Śivadāsa). On this word see *IC.* I. 684-86.

4 The commentary is entitled *Tattva-chandrikā* and is professedly based upon a previous *Ratna-prabhā* commentary. From the genealogy and personal details given in the concluding verses, we learn that Śivadāsa was the son of Ananta and grandson of Uddharaṇa, and that he belonged to Mālañchikā in Gauḍa (Pabna district). His father Ananta is said (*IC.* III. 157) to have been a court-physician of Barbak Shah in the 16th century.

5 Ed. *An. SS.* No. 27, 1894, with the *Vyākhyā-kusumāñjali* commentary of Śrikaṇṭhadatta. On the sources of Chakrapāṇidatta see Jolly in *ZDMG.* LIII. 377 f.

6 P. C. Ray, *Hist. of Hindu Chemistry,* I. introd. p. liv.

been introduced from the time of Vāgbhaṭa and Vṛinda. Chakrapāṇidatta also wrote a commentary on Charaka, entitled *Āyurveda-dīpikā* or *Charaka-tātparya-dīpikā*,[1] in the introduction to which he mentions Naradatta as his preceptor. His commentary on Suśruta is entitled *Bhānumatī*.[2] Two other useful works of his are *Śabda-chandrikā*,[3] a vocabulary of vegetable as well as mineral substances and compounds, and *Dravya-guṇa-saṁgraha*,[4] a work on dietics.

It would be convenient in this connection to notice two other medical writers of some importance who flourished in Bengal at a somewhat later date. The first is Sureśvara or Surapāla, who wrote a glossary of medical botany, entitled *Śabda-pradīpa*,[5] in which he gives an account of himself. His grandfather and father were respectively Devagaṇa, who was a court-physician to king Govinda-chandra, and Bhadreśvara, who served in a similar capacity to king Rāmapāla (called Vaṅgeśvara). He himself was physician to king Bhīmapāla, and should from these accounts be placed in the first half of the 12th century. He also wrote a *Vṛikshāyurveda*[6] on a similar subject, and a *Loha-paddhati* or *Loha-sarvasva*[7] on the medical use and preparation of iron. The other writer is Vaṅgasena, who was very probably an inhabitant of Bengal.[8] He wrote *Chikitsā-sāra-saṁgraha*,[9] in which he is described as the son of Gadādhara of Kāñjika. The lower limit of his date, *viz.*, the 12th century, is supplied by Hemādri's profuse quotations from this work in

[1] Ed. Srinath Visarad (Sūtra-sthāna and Vimāna-sthāna), Calcutta 1892. Also ed. V. K. Datar, *NSP*. Bombay 1922; ed. N. N. Sastri, 2 vols., Lahore 1929.—See Mitra, *Notices*, VI. 223, No. 2160 (incomplete MS.).

[2] Ed. in parts by Gangaprasad Sen, Vijayaratna Sen and Nishikanta Sen, Calcutta 1888-93. See Auf.-*Cat.* I. 175a.

[3] MSS. in Aufrecht, *Bod. Cat.*, No. 453, pp. 195-96; Eggeling, *op. cit.* V. 974, No. 2738/987 b. Also see Mitra, *Notices*, II. 25, No. 562.

[4] Ed. Jīvānanda Vidyāsāgar, 2nd ed., Calcutta 1897 with the commentary of Śivadāsa. See Mitra, *Notices*, IX, 43-44, Nos. 2931-32. The author quoted as Vaidya Gadādhara in *Sadukti-karṇāmṛita* and presumed to be a medical writer is identified (*IC.* III. 157 f.) with Gadādhara, a commentator on Suśruta; but the proofs are slender for the conjectural identification.

[5] MS. in Eggeling, *op. cit.* V. 974-77, No. 2739/1351c.

[6] MS. in Aufrecht, *Bod. Cat.* No. 768, pp. 324-25, where an analysis of contents is given.

[7] MS. in V.-*Cat.* I. p. 65.

[8] *IC.* III. 159.

[9] Ed. Nandakishor Gosvami, Calcutta 1889. For Mss., see Auf.-*Cat.* and especially Eggeling, *op. cit.* V. pp. 951-52. The work is also called *Vaidya-vallabha*. The *Chikitsā-mahārṇava* mentioned by R. G. Bhandarkar (*Report* 1885-1887) is probably the same work. The *Ākhyāta-vyākaraṇa* mentioned by R. L. Mitra (*Descriptive Cat.* of Skt. MSS. in *ASB*, Pt. I, Grammar, No. 29, Calcutta 1877) may or may not be by the same author.

Āyurveda-rasāyana commentary on Vāgbhaṭa's *Ashṭāṅga-hṛidaya.*[1] Vaṅgasena relies upon Suśruta but borrows freely from Mādhava's *Rug-viniśchaya.* It is not certain if the later medical commentators, Aruṇadatta,[2] Vijaya-rakshita,[3] Niśchalakara,[4] and Śrīkaṇṭhadatta[5] really belonged to Bengal.[6] We have no proof for such a conjecture; in any case, they are not independent writers of importance, and also fall chronologically outside our period.

Like the speculative Nyāya-vaiśeshika, the practical Dharma-śāstra literature achieved a distinction of its own in mediaeval Bengal. but of the early history of the latter, like that of the former, we know very little. That the study of Mīmāṁsā, allied to Dharma-śāstra, was not neglected is apparent from epigraphic records, as well as from the references, however disparaging, of Udayana and Gaṅgeśa, already mentioned above.[7] We also know that the two important Bengal writers on Dharma-śāstra, Bhavadeva and Aniruddha, were well versed in the teachings of Bhaṭṭa (Kumārila). Halāyudha in his *Brāhmaṇa-sarvasva* informs us that although Bengal[8] paid little attention to the Vedas, she studied Mīmāṁsā; and he himself, as we shall see, wrote a *Mīmāṁsā-sarvasva* which is now lost. But the subject is actually represented in this period by only one work, namely, the *Tautātita-mata-tilaka,* to be dealt with presently, of Bhavadeva Bhaṭṭa, which exists only in fragments. The study of the Vedic ritual is similarly evidenced by a single extant work composed by a little known scholiast, Nārāyaṇa son of Goṇa[9] and grandson of Umāpati. It is a commentary, entitled *Prakāśa,* on Kesava Miśra's *Chhāndoga-pariśishṭa,*[10]

[1] P. K. Gode in *IC.* III. 535 f. The Cambridge MS., as Eggeling notes, was copied in the Nepali era 396=1276 A.D.

[2] Wrote *Sarvāṅga-sundarī* on Vāgbhaṭa. His date is variously given as c. 1220 (Hoernle), 13th century (Cordier), 15th century (Jolly).

[3] Wrote, with his pupil Śrīkaṇṭhadatta, the *Madhu-kośa* on Mādhava's *Nidāna.* Hoernle dates him at c. 1240 and Jolly at the 14th or 15th century.

[4] Wrote *Prabhā* on Chakrapāṇi's *Dravya-guṇa.* Date not known.

[5] Also wrote *Kusumāñjali* on Vṛinda's *Siddha-yoga.*

[6] As claimed without much justification in *IC.* III. 157-58.

[7] See above p. 313, f.n. 4. The mislection *nigūḍhāchārya* for *uvaṭāchārya* in Halāyudha's *Brāhmaṇa-sarvasva* (vv. 20-21) led H. P. Śāstrī (*JBORS.* 1919, p. 173) to the supposition that there was an early author on Vedic ritualism named Nigūḍhāchārya; but the reference is undoubtedly to Uvaṭāchārya, the well-known author of the Vājasaneyi *Mantra-bhāshya* (*IHQ.* 1930, p. 783).

[8] But the reference may be only to certain sections of the Brahmins of Bengal (*v. infra* Ch. XV).

[9] The Bibl. Ind. ed. reads *tasyānujaḥ* (=younger brother of Umāpati), with the *v. l. tasyātmajaḥ,* which last is the reading also of the India Office Mss.

[10] Ed. Bibl. Ind. Pt. I. (only two fasc.); MS. in Egg.-*Cat.* I. 92-93, No. 1028 (incomplete).

which is a compendium of Sāmavedic Gṛihya ritual, as described by Gobhila. The author's ancestors belonged to Uttara Rāḍhā. His grandfather Umāpati is described as flourishing under Jayapāla, while Nārāyaṇa is said to have been a contemporary of Devapāla. But the work itself is of little merit.

Of the two earliest Bengal writers on Dharma-śāstra, Jitendriya and Bālaka, whose works are now lost, our information is scanty, being derived from citations in later authors. They are quoted and criticised by the Bengal authors, Jīmūtavāhana, Raghunandana and Śūlapāṇi, and are therefore conjectured to have flourished in Bengal before the 12th century A.D. In his *Kāla-viveka*,[1] Jīmūtavāhana mentions Jitendriya among writers who dealt with the subject of auspicious time (*kāla*) appropriate for ceremonies, and quotes in several passages his very words.[2] Jitendriya's views on Vyavahāra and Prāyaśchitta are also quoted in the *Dāya-bhāga* and the *Vyavahāra-mātṛikā* of Jīmūtavāhana, as well as in the *Dāyatattva* of Raghunandana. It would seem, therefore, that Jitendriya's lost work was fairly comprehensive in its scope; and as only these Bengal writers, and no other, quote him, the supposition that he flourished in Bengal in the first half of the 11th century is not unlikely. The other forgotten author, Bālaka, is known entirely from references by Jīmūtavāhana, Raghunandana and Śūlapāṇi,[3] who discuss his views mostly on Vyavahāra and Prāyaśchitta, Jīmūtavāhana going even to the length of sometimes punningly ridiculing them as childish (*bāla-vachana*).[4] If the Vāloka mentioned six times[5] in his *Prāyaśchitta-prakaraṇa* by Bhavadeva Bhaṭṭa, also a Bengal writer, be the same as our Bālaka, then his date would be anterior to 1100 A.D. There is also another Dharma-śāstra writer named Yogloka[6] who is known similarly from the references made by Jīmūtavāhana and Raghunandana. He appears to have treated the subject of Vyavahāra and composed a long (*Bṛihat*) and a short (*Laghu*) treatise on Kāla. He is quoted mostly for the purpose of being refuted, but since Jīmūtavāhana refers to old (*purātana*)

[1] Ed. Bibl. Ind., p. 380. See *JASB.* 1915, p. 315.

[2] For the passages see Kane, *Hist. of Dharma-śāstra,* I. pp. 281-83, where they are given in full.

[3] These passages are quoted in Kane, *op. cit.* pp. 283-84, which also see on the question of Bālaka's identity with Bālarūpa, pp. 284-86.

[4] *JASB.* 1915, p. 320.

[5] *JASB.* 1912, p. 336. Vāloka may be a common mislection of the Bengal scribe for Bālaka. The printed text (pp. 42, 44, 74, 81, 83, 106) apparently found the correct form Bālaka, but it does not utilise the MSS. of the text mentioned below (p. 322, f.n. 2).

[6] See Kane, *op. cit.* pp. 286-87.

manuscripts of Yogloka's work, he might have been even an older author than Jitendriya and Bālaka.

If not a great writer, Bhavadeva Bhaṭṭa was versatile and was certainly one of the most interesting personalities of his time. A great deal about him is known from an inscription[1] which eulogises Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva as a politician, scholar and author, and as a constructor of reservoirs and builder of temples and images, the identity of the author Bhavadeva with the person eulogised being established by the unique epithet, *Bālavalabhī-bhujaṅga,* applied to both.[2] This *Praśasti* of Bhavadeva and his family, composed by Bhavadeva's friend Vāchaspati-kavi,[3] consists of thirty-three elegantly written verses. Bhavadeva belonged to the Sāvarṇa-gotra (of the Kauthuma school of the Sāmaveda) and came from the Siddhala-grāma in Rāḍhā.[4] His ancestors were all learned men, and one of them received the Śāsana of Hastinībhiṭṭa from an unnamed king of Gauḍa. His grandfather Ādideva was likewise a minister of peace and war to some king of Vaṅga. His father was Govardhana; and his mother Sāṅgokā was the daughter of a Vandyaghaṭīya Brahman. Bhavadeva himself served for a long time under king Harivarman and probably also under his son, whose name is not given. Bhavadeva is described as prominent among the exponents of the Brahmādvaita system of philosophy, conversant with the writings of Bhaṭṭa (Kumārila), an antagonist of the Buddhists and heretic dialecticians, well versed in Artha-śāstra, Āyurveda, Astra-veda *etc.*, proficient in Siddhānta, Tantra and Gaṇita, and called the second Varāha because of his special keenness for Astrology and Astronomy, having himself composed a work on the Horā-śāstra.

[1] *EI.* VI. 203-07; N. G. Majumdar, *IB.* 25-41. On Bhavadeva see M. Chakravarti in *JASB.* 1912, pp. 332-48, which account has been corrected and supplemented by N. G. Majumdar *loc. cit.* and Kane, *op. cit.* pp. 301-06; cf. *supra* p. 202.

[2] The epithet has been the subject of much speculation (besides the work cited above, see R. D. Banerji, *PB.* 99, and *BI.* 288, and references cited therein); but Bālavalabhī is obviously a place-name, which occurs as such in the commentary on Sandhyākara Nandin's *Rāmacharita,* the exact situation of which, however, is unknown. A place called Vṛiddhavalabhī, situated in the Gauḍa country, is mentioned in the colophon to a MS. of *Sarva-deva-pratishṭhā-paddhati* of Trivikrama-sūri (Sastri-*Cat.* III. 529), which makes the meaning of Bāla in Bāla-valabhī intelligible. The word Bhujaṅga means here a lover or a Nāgaraka, and not a serpent, as M. Chakravarti and N. G. Majumdar are inclined to interpret (*JASB.* 1912, pp. 341-42). Cf. *supra* p. 157, f.n. 1.

[3] R. L. Mitra's conjecture that this is the well known philosophical writer, Vāchaspati Miśra, is unfounded. Six verses are ascribed to one Vāchaspati in the Bengal anthology, *Sadukti-karṇāmṛita,* but as one of these verses (ii. 33. 2) is quoted anonymously in *Daśa-rūpaka* (on ii. 29), he is probably a different person.

[4] The Sāvarṇa-gotra, as well as Siddhala in Uttara-Rāḍhā, is mentioned in the Belāva CP. of Bhojavarman (N. G. Majumdar, *op. cit.* p. 21).

He is said to have also composed a work on the Dharma-śāstra, which superseded the already existing texts, and, following Bhaṭṭa (*bhaṭṭokta-nītyā*), to have written a guide to Mīmāṁsā in one thousand *nyāyas*.

Although exaggeration is usual in such eulogistic enumeration, we have the means of verifying at least a part of this remarkable catalogue of accomplishments. No work of Bhavadeva on the Horā-śāstra or Phala-saṁhitā[1] has yet been discovered, but a fragment of his work on Mīmāṁsā is available. This is entitled *Tautātita-mata-tilaka*[2] and is known from a fragmentary manuscript in the India Office Library. It discusses the *Tantra-vārttika* of Tautātita or Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, the fragment covering only *Pūrva-mīmāṁsā-sūtra* ii. 1. Bhavadeva's works on Dharmaśāstra, however, are better known. These are, so far known, three in number, and respectively embrace the three important branches of Āchāra, Vyavahāra and Prāyaśchitta. The work on Vyavahāra or judicial procedure, called *Vyavahāra-tilaka,* is now lost; but it is known from citations in the *Vyavahāra-tattva* of Raghunandana,[3] the *Vīramitrodaya* of Mitra Miśra[4] and *Daṇḍa-viveka* of Vardha-

[1] Only one astrological work, *viz., Sārāvalī* of Kalyāṇavarman (ed. V. Subrahmanya Sastri, *NPS.* 3rd ed. 1928), is claimed for Bengal. The work or the author is quoted by Alberuni, Bhaṭṭa Utpala (966 A.D.) and Mallinātha (on the *Śiśupālavadha*). An opening verse in the India Office MS. of the work (i. 5 in the printed text) describes the author as *Vyāghrataṭīśvara* (*v. l.* in other MSS. *Vyāghrapadīśvara, Vyāghrabhaṭeśvara*) and connects him with Devagrāma. S. C. Banerji (*PHC.* III. 1939, p. 577) identifies Vyāghrataṭī with the place of the same name well known from three inscriptional records and thinks that it is Bāgḍi in Nadia district, Bengal, while Devagrāma is taken to be a village of that name in the same district. A line of Varman chiefs ruled over Vyāghrataṭī during the reigns of Dharmapāla and Devapāla, and Kalyāṇavarman might have belonged to this dynasty and ruled about the 8th or 9th century A.D. The work itself contains no other indications of its Bengal origin, except a passing reference to Samataṭa.

[2] Egg.-*Cat.* IV, No. 2166/1591, p. 690. Another MS., probably of the same work, is noticed in *TCM.* 1919-22, p. 5527. The work is mentioned by Hall in his *Index to the Bibliography of Indian Philosophical System,* p. 170. Hemādri in his *Chaturvarga°* (ed. Bibl. Ind., p. 120) disapproves of Bhavadeva's explanation of some views of Kumārila. The Sūtras actually dealt with in the India Office MS. are ii. 1. 1, 5, 9, 10, 13, 24, 30-35, 38, 40, 46-49.

[3] Ed. Jīvānanda Vidyāsāgar, II. 207; also p. 206. A MS. entitled *Dattaka-tilaka* exists in the Varendra Research Society's collection (see the Society's edition of Bhavadeva's *Prāyaśchitta-nirūpaṇa,* introd. p. 2). The first Maṅgala-śloka of this work is identical with the opening Maṅgala-śloka of his *Chhāndoga-karmānushṭhāna,* while the second verse refers to the *Vyavahāra-tilaka;* but it is apparently a later fabrication passed off in Bhavadeva's name inasmuch as it quotes such later writers as Chaṇḍeśvara Ṭhakkura (14th century).

[4] Ed. *CS.* p. 85.

māna.[1] The other Dharma-śāstra work is the *Prāyaśchitta-prakaraṇa*[2] which deals in six chapters with the modes of expiation for various sins and offences. The first chapter (Vadha-parichchheda) concerns itself with the murder of men and women and slaughter of animals; the second (Bhakshyābhakshya-p°) treats of forbidden food and drink; the third (Steya-p°) discusses various kinds of theft; the fourth (Agamyāgamana-p°) is occupied with sexual union with forbidden persons; the fifth (Saṁsarga-p°) is devoted to such topics as taking of improper gifts from outcasts, contracting of forbidden marriages, sale of forbidden food and contact of untouchable persons; while the sixth capter (Kṛichchhra-p°) concludes with the discussion of expiatory rites and penances. It gives a fairly full treatment of the subject and cites more than sixty authorities.[3] The reputation which the work enjoyed is indicated by the respect with which it is cited by such Smṛiti-writers as Vedāchārya,[4] Govindānanda and Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa.[5] On the Sāmavedic rites and ceremonies relating to the Saṁskāras, Bhavadeva wrote *Chhāndoga-karmānushṭhāna-paddhati*,[6] also variously called *Daśa-karma-paddhati*, *Daśa-karma-dīpikā* or *Saṁskāra-paddhati*. Its contents are devoted to Kushaṇḍikā, Udīchya-karman, Vivāha, Garbhādhāna, Puṁsavana, Sīmantonnayana, Śoshyantī-homa, Jāta-karman, Nishkramaṇa, Paushṭika, Anna-prāśana, Putra-mūrdhā-bhighrāṇa, Chūḍā-karaṇa, Upanayana, Samāvartana and Śālā-karman. From literary sources[7] Bhavadeva's date would be earlier than the first quarter of the 12th and even the last quarter of the 11th

[1] Mitra, *Notices*, I. p. 226, No. 1910. The work (ed. Kamalkrishna Smrititirtha, *GOS.*, Baroda 1931) belongs to the latter half of the 15th century.

[2] Also called °*nirupaṇa*. Ed. Varendra Research Society, Rajshahi 1927. MSS. in Eggling, iv, p. 554, No. 1725/561; Mitra, *Notices*, IX. 214-15, No. 3138, where an abstract of contents is given. Also MSS. in the Calcutta Sanskrit College Library, Nos. 183-84. The colophon calls the author Bālavalabhī-bhujaṅga and Sāndhivigrahika.

[3] For a list see *JASB.* 1912, p. 336; also index of works and authors to the printed edition.

[4] For reference see Kane, *op. cit.* p. 303.

[5] In his *Prāyaśchitta-saṁgraha* (Eggeling, *op. cit.* pp. 473, 555).

[6] So named in the second introductory verse. MS. in Eggeling, *op. cit.* p. 94, No. 452/5a (cf. No. 394); in the Calcutta Sanskrit College Library, No. 52; Bhandarkar Institute MSS. No. 9 of 1895-98 and No. 263 of 1887-91. There is also a MS. in the Dacca University Library; see *infra* Ch. XV. The epithet Bālavalabhī-bhujaṅga occurs in the colophon.

[7] On this question see M. Chakravarti in *JASB.* 1912, pp. 342-45; Kane, *op. cit.* pp. 305-06.

century; and this is supported by the palaeography and internal evidence of the Bhuvaneśvar inscription[1] concerning Bhavadeva.[2]

To this period probably belongs Jīmūtavāhana who is indeed the first of the three leading authorities of the Bengal school of Dharma-śāstra, the other two being Raghunandana and Śūlapāṇi who came later. Extremely divergent opinions, however, have been held on the question of his date, and he has been variously assigned to periods ranging from the 11th to the 16th century.[3] It is clear, however, that he could not have been earlier than the last quarter of the 11th century because he refers to *Śaka* year 1014 and mentions Bhoja and Govindarāja; and since he is himself quoted by Śūlapāṇi, Vāchaspati Miśra and Raghunandana, he could not have been later than the middle of the 15th century. Relying on astronomical as well as literary evidence, Monmohan Chakravarti would place him tentatively in the beginning of the 12th century, while P. V. Kane would approximate the date still further to a period between 1090 and 1130 A.D. Of Jīmūtavāhana's personal history not much is known. In the colophons of his works he is described as Pāribhadrīya Mahāmahopādhyāya, while at the conclusion of his *Vyavahāra-mātṛikā* and *Dāya-bhāga,* he informs us that he was born of the Pāribhadra family (*kula*). It is said that this name belongs to a section of Rāḍhīya Brahmans, still called Pārihāl or Pāri-gāṁi.[4] An astronomical reference in his *Kāla-viveka* (p. 290) appears to support the inference that Jīmūtavāhana belonged to Rāḍhā.

Of Jīmūtavāhana's three works,[5] all of which have been printed, the most well known and important is his *Dāya-bhāga,* which is the basis and paramount authority on the Hindu law of

[1] N. G. Majumdar, *op. cit.* p. 32. Cf. *supra* pp. 200 ff.

[2] Our Bhavadeva should be distinguished from several other later Bhavadevas who also wrote on Dharma-śāstra, *viz.* Bhavadeva, author of *Dāna-dharma-prakriyā* (middle of the 17th century), Bhavadeva, author of *Smṛiti-chandrikā* (first half of the 18th century) and Bhavadeva, author of *Sambandha-viveka* (on Sapiṇḍa relationship). These works do not mention either the epithet Bālavalabhī-bhujaṅga or the official designation Sāndhivigrahika of Bhavadeva.

[3] For an examination of the various dates, see Monmohan Chakravarti in *JASB.* 1915, pp. 321-27; Panchanan Ghosh in 26 *Calcutta Law Journal,* pp. 17f (journal portion) and Kane, *op. cit.* pp. 325-27.

[4] See M. Chakravarti in *JASB.* 1915, pp. 320-21. Śāstrī (*Cat.* III. xv) argues that since the Pārihals were reduced in status by Vallālasena, Jīmūtavāhana could not have paraded his being a Pāribhadrīya unless he flourished before Vallālasena.

[5] It appears that these three treatises were meant to form a part of an ambitious work on Dharma-śāstra called *Dharma-ratna;* hence the colophons read *iti dharma-ratne dāya-bhāgaḥ* (or *kāla-vivekaḥ* as the case may be). The ignoring of this fact has led to inaccuracies in the description of Jīmūtavāhana's works in some catalogues of manuscripts. Thus, the *Dharma-ratnas* mentioned in Mitra,

inheritance, partition and Strī-dhana in Bengal, except in cases where the *Mitāksharā,* from which it differs in some fundamental points,[1] is applicable. The work is widely known through Colebrooke's English translation and has been often printed in Bengal.[2] Its popularity and importance are indicated by the large number of commentaries[3] which exist, including one by Raghunandana who has utilised it also in his own authoritative works. The work defines and discusses the general principles of Dāya or inheritance and proceeds to the exposition of father's power over ancestral property, partition of father's and grandfather's property and division among sons after father's death. It then deals with the definition, classification and devolution of woman's property (Strī-dhana), after which it treats of persons excluded from partition and inheritance on grounds of disability, of property which is impartible, of the order of succession to sonless persons, of reunion, of partition of coparcenery property concealed but subsequently discovered, and of settlement of partition disputes by the court. It is a work of great learning and acuteness, and freely criticises a large number of authorities,[4] ancient and modern, some of whom are not known otherwise.

His *Vyavahāra-mātṛikā,*[5] as its very name implies, deals with judicial procedure. Its importance is evidenced by references to it by Raghunandana and Vāchaspati Miśra.[6] It divides the subject into four Pādas, with an introductory exposition (Vyavahāra-mukha) dealing with the eighteen titles of law, the function and qualification of the judge (Prāḍvivāka), the different grades of court and the duties of the Sabhyas. Of the four stages of Vyavahāra, the first (Bhāshā-pāda) deals with the plaint (Pūrva-paksha) of the plaintiff

Notices, v. 297-98, No. 1974 and in M. *Cat.* VI. 2385-88, Nos. 3172-74 are respectively the *Kāla-viveka* and the *Dāya-bhāga.*

[1] See Kane, *op. cit.* p. 323 for a summary of these distinctive doctrines. Jīmūtavāhana does not quote or mention the *Mitāksharā* of Vijñāneśvara, but he appears to know the doctrines of the school.

[2] Reprinted, Calcutta 1910.

[3] The work was edited by Bharat Chandra Śiromaṇi with seven commentaries, 2 vols., Calcutta 1863-66. In some editions, as for instance in that of Jīvānanda Vidyāsāgar, the work is divided into sections, but there is no such division in the MSS.

[4] For a discussion of these citations, see M. Chakravarti, *op. cit.* pp. 319-20; Kane, *op. cit.* pp. 323f.

[5] Ed. Asutosh Mookerjee in *Memoirs of ASB.* II, No. 5 Calcutta 1910-14. This name of the work is given in the first introductory verse, and is found in later citations; but colophons name it variously as *Nyāya-mātṛikā* or *Nyāya-ratna-mālikā.*

[6] For references, see M. Chakravarti and Kane in the works cited.

(Arthin) and with surety (Pratibhū) ; the second (Uttara-pāda) treats of the four kinds of reply (Uttara) by the defendant (Pratyarthin) ; the third (Kriyā-pāda) is devoted to proof or burden of proof (Kriyā) and various kinds of evidence, human (Mānushi) and divine (Daivī), the author purposely omitting the divine which consists of trial by ordeal; and the fourth (Nirṇaya-pāda) concludes with the topic of the decision and order of the court. The work abounds in quotations,[1] calculated as about six hundred in number, and proves the learning and dialectic abilities of the author. Jīmūtavāhana's third work, *Kāla-viveka*,[2] declares in its second introductory verse its object of elucidating the topic of Kāla or appropriate time for particular ceremonies, which has not been properly understood and treated by previous writers, seven of whom are directly mentioned in one verse.[3] It deals accordingly with the question of appropriate season, month, day and hour for the performance of religious duties and ceremonies, the determination of intercalary months, the suitability of lunar and solar months, and the auspicious time for various festivals, including the Kojāgara and the Durgotsava. The work shows the same skill and learning of the author and abounds in quotations, references and criticisms of previous authors, while its reputation is indicated by its wide recognition by such later writers as Raghunandana, Śūlapāṇi, Vāchaspati Miśra and Govindānanda.

By far the most extensive literature of this period, which has also an importance and interest of its own, concerns itself with the large number of Buddhist writers, whose works, however, are mostly lost in Sanskrit but are preserved in Tibetan translation in the *Bstan-ḥgyur*.[4] They flourished in Bengal under the Buddhist Pāla kings in the 10th and 11th centuries or perhaps a little earlier. The works belong to the different Yānas which developed out of the

[1] Discussed by M. Chakravarti and Kane, as above.

[2] Ed. Bibl. Ind., Calcutta 1905.

[3] p. 308. They are Jitendriya, Śāṅkhadhara, Andhūka, Saṁbhrama, Harivaṁśa, Dhavala and Yoglauka.

[4] Our account is chiefly based on Cordier- *Cat.* (*Bstan-ḥgyur* I-LXX), Part 2 (*Rgyud* Section), Paris 1908. It is not known if the originals were all written in Sanskrit; some of them were obviously in the vernacular, and some are described obscurely as written in the Indian Language. The locality of the author and the place of translation are not always given. A good index (barring a few slips) of this volume of the Catalogue is given in *BGD.* Appendix.—We have also made use of the works of Tāranātha (1608 A.D.) and *Pag Sam Zon Jang* (1747 A.D.). cited below. Other authorities are cited below.—In matters of Tibetan sources we have received cordial assistance from Dr. Prabodh Chandra Bagchi, whose chapter on Religious History (*infra* Ch. XIII) in this volume forms a supplement in matters relating to Tantric Buddhism.

Mahāyāna, and are loosely called Buddhist Tantra (*Rgyud*), as opposed to the Buddhist Sūtra (*Mdo*),[1] inasmuch as they teach esoteric doctrines, rites and practices in a highly obscure, and perhaps symbolic, language. Bengal, as will be shown below (*infra* Ch. XIII), had been pre-eminently a land of Buddhism even before the 7th century A.D.,[2] but neither Hiuen Tsang nor I-tsing makes any reference to Buddhist Tantrism which could not have developed so early.[3] Tāranātha tells us[4] that during the reign of the Pāla kings there were many masters of magic, Mantra-Vajrāchāryas, who being possessed of various Siddhis, performed miraculous feats; and his testimony of the prevalence of Buddhist Tāntric culture is borne out by the hundreds of works produced on this subject, not a small part of which presumably belongs to Bengal. It was during this time that the monasteries of Nālandā, Vikramaśīla, Jagaddala, Somapurī and Pāṇḍubhūmi were renowned seats of Buddhist learning, with which the composition or translation of many of these Tantric works are associated. The second of the Vihāras named above, which is said to have been situated on the banks of the Ganges, most probably had its location, like that of Nālandā, in Magadha; but the other Vihāras, no less distinguished, were situated in Varendra and other parts of Bengal, although their exact situation is a matter for speculation.[5]

Many of these Vajrayānist writers and thaumaturgic Siddhāchāryas of mediaeval cults, whether directly Buddhist or indirectly of Buddhistic origin, belonged undoubtedly to the east and most probably to Bengal in these centuries. Some of them travelled beyond Bengal and were so transformed into deified or legendary

[1] See L. de la Vallée Poussin, Tantrism (Buddhist) in *ERE*. 195-96.

[2] The Tantra itself was probably of foreign origin (H. P. Śāstrī, *Nepal Catalogue*, II. preface p. xviii; P. C. Bagchi in *IHQ*. 1931, pp. 1f) and appears to have found a luxuriant soil in the northern, southern and eastern frontiers of India, the Madhyadeśa having been the seat of orthodox Brahmanical culture from a very early period.

[3] The high antiquity claimed for the Buddhist Tantra by Benoytosh Bhattacharya in his various writings can hardly be substantiated. No serious student of early Buddhism will agree that the Buddha gave instructions on Mudrā and Maṇḍala, and incorporated Tāntric practices into his system of religion. The Tāntric works are found in late Tibetan translations which assign some of them definitely to the Pāla period; this is confirmed by the two chroniclers of Tibetan tradition, Tāranātha and Sumpā; and no such work was translated into Chinese at an early period (see M. Winternitz in *IHQ*. 1933, pp. 8f, and Prabodh Chandra Bagchi in *IHQ*. 1930, pp. 576-77).

[4] *Tar*. 201. Tāranātha's other work (trans. A. Grünwedel) is cited below as *Edelsteinmine* (*Edelst.*)

[5] See *infra* Ch. XIII.

figures that all trace of their place of origin and activity was obliterated. Although the descriptions are often insufficient or obscure, the Tibetan sources sometimes definitely mention the locality of some of these works and authors; and of them alone we can be reasonably certain that they belonged to Bengal. The question of chronology and provenance is further complicated by a curious conflict and confusion of traditions, both Indian and Tibetan. The chronology can in most cases be settled only roughly or relatively;[1] and with regard to the problem of authorship or the identity of particular authors still greater uncertainty prevails. As most of these cults overlap in point of time as well as of doctrine and practice, there has been a tendency towards an appropriation, and sometimes a mutual assimilation, of teachers and their teaching[2] through a curious syncretism of beliefs characteristic of mediaeval popular faiths. Into these difficult problems our limited scope precludes us from entering in detail, but in the midst of such uncertainty and meagreness of decisive material it is necessary to present the question with a proper regard to the available data and avoid hasty conclusions and speculations on insufficient basis.

[1] A systematic chronology has been attempted by B. Bhattacharya in *JBORS.* 1928, pp. 341ff., in *Tattva-saṁgraha*, p. xv f, and in *Sādhana-mālā*, ii, xlii f; but the available evidence is slender, and there is no agreement of the traditions concerning spiritual succession of these teachers, or their relationship to one another. Rāhula Sāṅkṛityāyana (*JA.* ccxxv. 1934, pp. 209 ff.) gives an account of the origin of Vajrayāna and the succession of the eighty-four Siddhas, in which he traces their spiritual descent from Saraha (placed before 750 A.D. as a disciple of Haribhadra and contemporary of Dharmapāla), whose disciple was Sabar-pā, the master of Lui-pā; the other great Siddhas (Virūpa, Goraksha, Bhusuku, Jālaṁdhara, *etc.*) are all placed in the reign of Devapāla at the Vikramaśīla *vihāra* constructed by the king. Rāhula Sāṅkṛityāyana would distinguish (*op. cit.* p. 211) Mantra-yāna and Vajra-yāna periods chronologically into 400-700 A.D. and 700-1200 A.D. respectively, and believes that Tantric Buddhism originated in Southern India at about the 6th century A.D. and became wide-spread in Northern India through the influence of the eighty-four Siddhas. But in his list (*op. cit.* pp. 220-25) only Vīṇā-pā belongs to Gauḍa, Kāṇha-pā to Somapurī and Vajra (Ghaṇṭa-pā) to Varendra, the remaining Siddhas being assigned to provinces outside Bengal (mostly Magadha, Orissa and Kāmarūpa). It is not known how far his Tibetan source (*Chaturaśīti-siddha-pravṛitti* in *Bstan-ḥgyur*) embodies reliable tradition; at least, it does not agree in all details with our information from other sources and traditions.

[2] This is true not only between the Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna (or Mantra-yāna) but also between Vajra-yāna and Sahaja-siddhi. As Mantra-yāna and Vajra-yāna grew out of Mahāyāna, the line of demarcation between a Mahāyānist and a Vajrayānist work is not fixed; for the former often contains Tāntric ideas and practices of Vajra-yāna, while the latter includes topics essentially Mahāyānist. Thus, Śāntideva's *Śikshā-samuchchaya*, an undoubtedly Mahāyānist work, contains unreserved praise of the use of the *dhāraṇīs* (see ed. Bendall, p. 140)

Apart from these handicaps, the available data are unfortunately too scanty for a full and systematic account of this literature. A glance at the catalogue of the *Rgyud* in *Bstan-ḥgyur* will show not only the variety but also the very large number of texts that were composed. But preserved in Tibetan, they have been, so far, little studied, while even the very few which are available in Sanskrit have not all been published. Our knowledge of Vajra-yāna, as of other later Yānas, with which these works are concerned, is extremely limited.[1] To realise and restore these works from Tibetan, therefore, had been found to be neither an easy nor always a safe task. They were meant, again, for a limited sectarian purpose and possess little that is of general or literary interest. Apart from their technical or esoteric terminology, they are often written with an entire disregard for grammatical or elegant expression. They never pretend to be academic, but declare[2] that their object is to be intelligible without much grammatical or literary preparation. Most of these works consist either of Stotras of varying lengths to Tārā, Avalokiteśvara, Mañjuśrī and other personages of later Buddhist pantheon, or of theurgic texts, called Sādhanas and Vidhis, of esoteric devotion, doctrine and practice. Some of them are also texts of magical ritual or completely dedicated to magic, even to black magic. Nevertheless, with their characteristic deities, Stotras and Saṅgītis, their Mantra,

and traces of other Tāntric ideas (See Winternitz, *op. cit.* II. 380, 387 f). The Tibetan canon, no doubt, distinguishes the Sūtra (*Mdo*) and the Tantra (*Rgyud*) and classifies texts under these heads; but the *Mdo* and *Rgyud* very often overlap. At the same time, it is generally certain that works properly Tāntric are hardly to be found outside *Rgyud*. We have in our account here proceeded on this assumption, especially with reference to the question of identity of the authors. On Sahaja-siddhi and Nātha cult, see below.

[1] An account of the different Tantras (Buddhist) is scattered throughout in Tāranātha's two works. For modern exposition, see H. P. Śāstrī, introd. to his ed. of *Advaya-vajra-saṁgraha, GOS.* xl, Baroda 1927; B. Bhattacharyya, introd. to his editions of *Sādhana-mālā*, Vol. II, *GOS.* xli, Baroda 1928 and of *Guhya-samāja, GOS.* liii, Baroda 1931, and also *Origin and Development of Vajrayāna* in *IHQ*. 1927, pp. 733-46 and *Glimpses of Vajra-yāna* in *PTOC*. III. 133 f; M. Shahidullah, *Les Chants mystique,* Paris 1928, pp. 10 ff; for a more critical interpretation see Wint.-*Lit.* (Revised Eng. Trs.), II. 375-40; L. de la Vallée Poussin, Tantrism (Buddhist) in *ERE*. XII. 193 f (where some of the terms Sādhana, Vajra etc. are discussed), also his other works cited therein; P. C. Bagchi in *IHQ*. 1930, pp. 577 f and in his ed. of *Kaula-jñāna-nirṇaya,* Calcutta 1934, pp. 33-59.

[2] An interesting passage, quoted in Sastri-*Cat.* I. No. 6[illegible] from the *Vimala-prabhā* commentary on the *Kālachakra-yāna,* tells us that Buddhist writers deliberately laid aside all rules and conventions of Sanskrit grammar and prosody and wrote only with a view to the sense; and this is certainly true in the case of most of these Tāntric writings in Sanskrit. The authors seem to take a pride in writing ungrammatical Sanskrit and ridicule those who are fastidious about grammatical accuracy.

Mudrā and Maṇḍala, and their Dhāraṇī, Yoga and Samādhi, they present a phase of Buddhist Tantra, closely allied to the Brahmanical, which possesses considerable interest and importance in the history of mediäeval religious cults. As such, they have not yet received as much recognition as they fully deserve in the history, at least, of the mediaeval culture of Bengal.

It is necessary to point out in this connexion that our extremely inadequate knowledge of the Buddhist Tantra should not give us freedom in elucidating its doctrines or pronouncing hasty judgments on its spirit and outlook. Rajendra Lala Mitra[1] in the last century spoke of the Buddhist Tantra as reeking of "pestilent dogmas and practices"; and the opinion has ever since been repeated in various form.[2] It is not our intention to enter into the question here, but it must be said that, whatever may have been the state of affairs in later times and in certain writers of the decadent schools, there is nothing to support the view that the Vajra-yāna doctrines in their origin encouraged sexual rites and obscenities.[3] Magic, mysticism and theurgy were undoubtedly at their basis, but it should be recognised that all Tāntric works of the higher class, whether Buddhistic or Brahmanical, present their mystical doctrines in an equally mystical language, of which a literal understanding would be unwarranted and misleading. They speak of unknown methods and ideas of spiritual experience, and employ esoteric expressions to signify unknown spiritual realities. The symbolical language is sometimes called *saṁdhā-bhāshā,* which being intentional (*ābhiprāyika*), is meant to convey something different from what is actually

[1] *Sanskrit Buddhist Literature of Nepal,* Calcutta 1882, p. 261.

[2] Haraprasād Śāstrī, for instance, declares (Sastri-*Cat.* I, preface) that the Tantra works discard asceticism and teach enjoyment of the senses; Benoytosh Bhattacharya (*Sādhana-mālā,* II. xxii, and also in other writings) uses stronger language and stigmatises them as specimens of "the worst immorality and sin"; while Moriz Winternitz (*IHQ.* 1933, pp. 3-4; more guardedly in *Hist. of Ind. Lit.,* II. 398-99) is frankly puzzled at what appears to him to be an "unsavoury mixture of mysticism, occult pseudo-science, magic and erotics" couched in "strange and often filthy language." While conceding that Buddhist Tāntrism is more than a pagan system of rites and sorcery, even a discerning and well-informed critic like L. de la Vallée Poussin would attribute to it "disgusting practices, both obscene and criminal." Grünwedel's attitude that the Buddhist Tantra is all necromancy is similarly one-sided.

[3] P. C. Bagchi in *IHQ.* 1930, pp. 577-80; G. Tucci in *JRAS.* 1935, p. 681. One requires scarcely to be reminded that Hiuen Tsang (Watters, II. 165) refers to the high tone and austere lives of the Nālandā monks, which account is confirmed also by I-tsing who spent ten years at Nālandā. Morever, the older traditions of Tantra literature in general hardly permit us to attribute obscenities to its practices.

expressed.[1] There is also an apparent sex-symbolism here, as in other mediaeval religious systems, which expresses fervent spiritual longings or strange theological fancies in the intimate language and imagery of earthly passion. This mode of thought and expression, no doubt, borders dangerously upon sense-devotion and sexual emotionalism, but it is only an aspect of that erotic mysticism which is often inseparable from mediaeval beliefs, and need not be taken as implying sexual licence.

A consideration of all this, however, belongs to the sphere of religious history and falls outside our province. On the other hand, some of these Buddhist writers were also regular logicians and philosophers, whose works deserve notice in the general literary history of Mahāyāna Buddhism. As very few of these writings, however, are preserved independently in Sanskrit and possess little literary interest, it will not be necessary for us to enter into details. We shall give here a general survey of the more important writers who in all probability belonged to Bengal and contributed materially in Sanskrit to the growth of the Buddhist literature both in its general and esoteric aspects.

We have already spoken of Chandragomin the grammarian. The Tibetan tradition does not distinguish him definitely from the Tāntric Chandragomin who is credited with thirty-six miscellaneous texts in the *Bstan-ḥgyur.* They include not only mystic Stotras in praise of Tārā, Mañjuśrī and other personalities of later Buddhist hagiology, but also works on Tāntric Abhichāra (such as *Abhichāra-karman, Chamū-dhvaṁsopāya, Bhaya-trāṇopāya, Vighna-nirāsaka-pramathanopāya*) as well as a few magical tracts apparently of a medical character (such as *Jvara-rakshā-vidhi, Kushṭha-chikits-opāya*) ! The logician Chandragomin, whose *Nyāya-siddhyāloka* also exists in Tibetan, is probably a different person.

The next important personage is the Mahāyānist scholar Śīla-bhadra, the friend and teacher of Hiuen Tsang, who mentions him[2] as one of the great monks who rendered good service to Buddhism by their lucid commentaries. Originally a Brahman, he belonged to the royal family of Samataṭa and became a pupil of Dharmapāla at Nālandā, of which he subsequently became the head. None of

[1] V. Bhattacharya in *IHQ*. 1928, p. 287 f; P. C. Bagchi in *IHQ*. 1930, pp. 389 f for a whole chapter on Saṁdhā-bhāshā in *Hevajra-tantra;* also M. Shahidullah, *op. cit.* pp. 9-10; P. C. Bagchi in *IHQ*. 1931, pp. 9 f. Edgerton (*JAOS*. 1937, p. 185 f) is of opinion that the Buddhist word *Saṁdhā* or *Saṁdhi* implies "complete, comprehensive (and so) fundamental, essential meaning."

[2] See Watters, II. 165, 169, also pp. 109, 227; Takakusu—*I-tsing*, pp. xlv, 181.

his works, except *Ārya-buddha-bhūmi-vyākhyāna* preserved in Tibetan,[1] has survived.

Of Śāntideva the problem of identity and provenance[2] is more difficult. The Tāntric Śāntideva to whom three Vajra-yāna texts are assigned in the *Bstan-ḥgyur*[3] is probably not identical with the well known Mahāyānist Śāntideva who was the author of *Śikshā-samuchchaya*[4] and *Bodhicharyāvatāra*.[5] This earlier Mahāyānist teacher, Śāntideva, who probably belonged to the 7th century, came, according to Tāranātha,[6] from the royal family of Saurāshṭra, was for a time a minister of king Pañchamasiṁha and became a pupil of Jayadeva, the successor of Dharmapāla at Nālandā. The Tāntric Śāntideva on the other hand, belonged, according to the *Bstan-ḥgyur*,[7] to Zahor, the identity of which place is obscure but which is sometimes located in Bengal.[8] According to another tradition,[9] Śāntideva had another name Bhusuku (called also Rāutu), but

[1] Cordier, *op. cit.* III 365.

[2] Discussed briefly in *BGD.* 23-24 and *JBORS.* 1919, pp. 501-05.

[3] Cordier, *op. cit.* II. 140, 230, 241. They are: *Śrī-guhyasamāja-mahāyoga-tantra-vali-vidhi*, *Sahaja-gīti* and *Chitta-chaitanya-śamanopāya.*

[4] Ed. C. Bendall, Bibl. Buddhica, St. Petersburg 1902, and translated by Bendall and W. H. D. Rouse, London 1922. According to Bendall, the work was translated into Tibetan between 816 and 838 A.D., but was probably written as early as the middle of the 7th century.

[5] Ed. I. P. Minayeff in *Zapiski.* IV (1889) and *JBTS.* 1894. Prajñākaramati's commentary (with the text), ed. La Vallée Poussin, Bibl. Ind., 1901-14. The text is translated by Poussin (Paris 1907), and in an abridged form by L. D. Barnett, London 1909 (Wisdom of the East). A *Sūtra-samuchchaya* is also ascribed to Śāntideva by Tāranātha; on this work see Wint.-*Lit.* II. 366, note, and references therein cited.

[6] *Tar.* 162 f. Sumpā agrees with this account and states that Śāntideva was known in his boyhood as Śāntivarman, son of Kalyāṇavarman, and that he became a minister of Pañchasiṁha, king of Magadha. The fragment of a biography mentioned by H. P. Śāstrī (Sastri-*Cat.* I. 52, No. 9990/52; for a summary see *IA.* 1913, pp. 49-52, *BGD.* 9-11 and *JBORS.* 1919, pp. 501-05); the MS. (c. 14th century) is apparently the work of a late Tāntric writer and is of doubtful value; it mentions Mañjuvarman as Śāntideva's father.

[7] Cordier, *loc. cit.*

[8] This place Zahor is conjectured in turns to be Lahore and Jessore in South Bengal (Waddell and Sarat Chandra Das) and Sabhar in East Bengal (H. P. Śāstrī). The suggestion (*IHQ.* 1935, pp. 143-44) that Zahor is in Rāḍhā is hardly convincing. A. H. Francke (*Indian Tibet,* II. 65, 89-90) would with great probability identify it with Mandi in North-Western India (see Bagchi in *IHQ.* 1930, pp. 581-82).

[9] *Pag Sam Jon Zang,* Pt. I, pp. cxlvii, 120. The tradition is given also in Śāstrī's fragmentary biography mentioned above. But *Tar.* 249 believes that Bhuśuka (*sic*), whom he does not identify with Śāntideva, was a contemporary of Dīpaṁkara Śrījñāna and therefore a much later teacher.

tradition is uncertain as to which Śāntideva is meant. It arises probably from a confusion with Bhusuku who is known as a Buddhist Tāntric writer of Dohās in the vernacular,[1] following the Baṅgālī sub-sect of the Sahaja-siddhi,[2] and who could not be, if he is a disciple of Dīpaṁkara Śrījñāna, earlier than the 11th century. He may or may not be identical with Śānti-pā or Śānti-pāda,[3] to whom also some vernacular Dohās are ascribed[4] and who is described as a disciple of both Kṛishṇāchārya and Jālaṁdhara.[5]

Evidence is equally inconclusive with regard to the identity and place of origin of Śānti-(or Śānta-)rakshita, who is placed by the Tibetan tradition in the 8th century. According to Sumpā,[6] he belonged to the royal family of Zahor, which, as we have noted, some scholars are inclined to locate, on dubious grounds, in Bengal; but the *Bstan-ḥgyur*, which gives three Tāntric works under the name Śāntirakshita,[7] is silent about his place of origin. The Tibetan

[1] The eight *dohās* assigned to Bhusuku in the *Charyācharya-viniśchaya* (*BGD.*) are Nos. 6, 21, 23, 27, 30, 41, 43, and 49. To him probably also belongs the Vajra-yāna work called *Chaturābharaṇa* (Sastri-*Cat.* I. 82; MS. dated in 1295 A.D.) which deals with some of the occupation of Tāntric Buddhists and contains some vernacular *dohās*.—On the language of the *dohās* of the twenty-two authors included in *Charyācharya°*, see S. K. Chatterji, *op. cit.* pp. 112-17; M. Shahidullah, *op. cit.* pp. 33 f. Cf. *infra*, Ch. XII.

[2] *BGD.* introd., p. 12. This reference is said to indicate his Bengal origin. The *dohās* also appear to be written in proto-Bengali. According to Grünwedel (*Geschichten d. Mahāsiddhas*, p. 184) Bhusuku belonged to the Kshatriya caste, flourished in Nālandā in the time of Devapāla, and was known by the name of Śāntideva. In Rāhula Sāṅkṛityāyana's list (*op. cit.* p. 222), Bhusuku occurs as a prince who flourished in the reign of Devapāla (809-849 A.D.) at Nālandā.

[3] Sumpā, *op. cit.* p. cxix. In Rāhula's list, Śāntipā occurs separately as a Brahman of Magadha who flourished in Mahīpāla's time (*c.* 988-1038 A.D.).

[4] The *dohās* in *Charyācharya°* are: Nos. 15 and 26.

[5] To Śānti-pāda, who is also called Ratnākara-śānti, is ascribed *Sukha-duḥkha-dvaya-parityāga-dṛishṭi* in *Bstan-ḥgyur* (Cordier, II. 234). A Sanskrit *Dvibhuja-heruka-sādhana* of his is published in *Sādhana-mālā*, II. 474-76. Tāranātha (*Edelsteinmine*, pp. 105-06) describes Ratnākara-śānti or Śānti as a Brāhman of Magadha who became an Āchārya of Vikramaśīla and preached for seven years in Siṁhala. See Grünwedel, *op. cit.* 156-58. To Ratnākara-śānti eighteen Tāntric works are ascribed in *Bstan-ḥgyur*. A *Chhando-ratnākara* by Ratnākara-śānti is noticed in *JASB.* 1908, p. 595, as existing in the Tibetan version. (Sanskrit text, with the Tibetan version, ed. Georg Huth, Berlin 1890).

[6] *Op. cit.* pp. xcix, 49. Sarat Chandra Das is here (see p. ci) uncertain about the location of Zahor, but in *JBTS.* I (1893), p. 1 f, he believes that Śāntirakshita was a native of Gauḍa, which opinion has been repeated by Benoytosh Bhattacharya and others.

[7] Viz., *Ashṭa-tathāgata-stotra*, *Vajradhara-saṅgīta-bhagavat-stotra-ṭīkā* and *Hevajrodbhava-kurukullyāyāḥ Pañcha-mahopadeśa* at Cordier, pp. 11, 12, 93. He is also known as Āchārya Bodhisattva, to whom also four works, mostly on Saptatathāgata, are ascribed in Cordier, pp. 298, 368, 369.

tradition, however, appears to centre round the Mahāyānist logician and scholar Śāntarakshita; but he does not appear to be definitely distinguished from the Vajrayānist Tāntric author, Śāntirakshita, who is connected with Padmasambhava of Uḍḍiyāna[1] as his brother-in-law and collaborator, but who may or may not be the same person. The logician Śāntarakshita was a high priest and teacher at Nālandā and followed the Svatantra Mādhyamika school. From this standpoint he reviewed with great acuteness and scholarship the earlier philosophical systems, both Buddhist and non-Buddhist, in his *Tattva-saṁgraha*,[2] which exists both in Sanskrit and Tibetan, and on which his pupil Kamalaśīla[3] wrote a commentary. He also wrote *Vāda-nyāya-vṛitti-vipañchitārtha*[4] and *Madhyamakālaṁkāra-kārikā* (the latter with his own commentary),[5] which are available only in the Tibetan version. His reputation must have travelled beyond the limits of India, and he is said to have visited Tibet at the invitation of king Khri-sron-lde-bstan and assisted him in building the first regular Buddhist monastery of Bsām-ye on the model of the Odantapurī Vihāra of Magadha.[6] He is said to have worked for thirteen years in Tibet, and, along with Padmasambhava and his own disciple Kamalaśīla, laid the foundation of Buddhism in that country.

[1] Waddell, *Lamaism* (London 1895), p. 379 f. The name of the place Uḍḍiyāna is also given in the forms Oḍḍiyāna, Oḍyāna, Oḍiyāna and sometimes as O-rgyan or U-rgyana; but it has not yet been definitely located. B. Bhattacharya, following H. P. Śāstrī, would identify it with Orissa and draw far-reaching conclusions about Buddhist Tāntric centres in Orissa. But this is only a conjecture; and Orissa is often mentioned as Oḍivisa in the Tibetan works. In *JBORS*. 1928, p. 34, however, B. Bhattacharya believes that the place was in Assam! There is great probability in the identification proposed by Sylvain Lévi (*JA*. 1915, p. 105 f; see F. W. Thomas in *JRAS*. 1906, p. 461 note) with the Swat valley in North-western India, the people of which, even in Hiuen Tsang's time (Watters, I. 225), made "the acquaintance of magical formulas their occupation." See the question discussed by P. C. Bagchi and N. Das Gupta in *IHQ*. VI. 580-83, XI. 142-44.

[2] Ed. *GOS*. No. xxx-xxxi, Baroda 1926, with Kamalaśīla's commentary. Cf. M. Winternitz in *Indologia Pragensia*, I. 1929, pp. 73 f. A Vajra-yāna work *Tattva-siddhi* is also mentioned by B. Bhattacharya, but this may be by the other Śāntarakshita or Śāntirakshita.

[3] There is no definite evidence that Kamalaśīla belonged to Bengal; but he is described as a contemporary of Lui-pā.

[4] See S. C. Vidyabhusan, *Indian Logic* (Calcutta 1921), pp. 323-27.

[5] *Tar*. 204-5, 213. See Wint.-*Lit*. II. 375.

[6] Sarat Chandra Das (*JBTS*. I. 1-31) gives an account of Śāntirakshita's activities in Tibet. He is said to have visited Tibet in 743 A.D., erected the monastery of Bsām-ye in 749 and died in 762 A.D. This has been accepted by B. Bhattacharya (introd. to *Tattva-saṁgraha*, p. xivf) and Phanindranath Bose (*Indian Teachers of Buddhist Universities*, Madras 1923, p. 124). Cf. *infra*, Ch. XVII.

With regard to Jetāri, the next important writer, the Tibetan tradition[1] appears to distinguish a senior and junior sage of that name. The senior or Mahā-Jetāri belonged to Varendra, where his father Garbhapāda lived at the court of king Sanātana.[2] He is said to have received from Mahāpāla the diploma of the Paṇḍita of Vikramaśīla Vihāra, and instructed Dīpaṁkara Śrījñāna in the Buddhist lore. The younger Jetāri[3] was a Buddhist Tāntric sage of Bengal, who initiated Bodhibhāgya and gave him the name Lāvaṇyavajra. It is possible that the three learned works on Buddhist logic, preserved in Tibetan,[4] belonged to the senior Jetāri, while the junior Jetāri was responsible for eleven Vajrayānist Sādhanas also preserved in Tibetan.[5]

Dīpaṁkara Śrījñāna, the alleged pupil of Jetāri, appears to have been a very industrious and prolific writer, to whom the *Bstan-ḥgyur* assigns about one hundred and sixty-eight works,[6] of which a large number consists of translations. They are mostly Vajrayānist works, known as Sādhanas[7] (*Rgyud*), but Sūtra (*Mdo*) works, also listed in the *Bstan-ḥgyur* under his name, presumably deals with the general doctrines of the Mahāyāna. Haraprasād Śāstrī is probably right[8] in distinguishing two Dīpaṁkaras, but there might have been more Dīpaṁkaras than two.[9] Of these, Dīpaṁkara Śrījñāna, who

[1] *Tar.* 230; Sumpā, *op. cit.* pp. xcviii, 116.

[2] *Tar.* 230-33. Sumpā, however, believes that Jetāri was born of a Yoginī whom Sanātana kept for Tāntric practices!

[3] Sumpā, *op. cit.* pp. xcviii, 112.

[4] *Hetu-tattva-upadeśa, Dharma-dharmi-viniśchaya* and *Bālāvatāra-tarka.* See S. C. Vidyabhusan, *op. cit.* pp. 337-38. There are also two other Sūtra works of Jetāri in *Bstan-ḥgyur,* viz., *Bodhi-pratideśana-vṛitti* and *Sugata-mahāvibhaṅga-kārikā* (see *Tar* 327).

[5] Cordier, *op. cit.* pp. 84, 101, 289, 299, 319, 357, 366, 367.

[6] The *Rgyud* section, according to M. Shahidullah's calculation, contains 96, *Rgyud-ḥgrel* 36 and *Mdo-ḥgrel* 36. Śāstrī's index of Cordier's summary of *Rgyud-ḥgrel* I-LXX gives over 100 Tāntric works, of which about 40 are translations.

[7] On the characteristics of the Sādhana and of Vajra-yāna literature in general see L. de la Vallée Poussin in *ERE. loc. cit.*; Wint.-*Lit.* II. 387-92. Most of the published Sādhanas, as in B. Bhattacharya, *Sādhana-mālā,* 2 vols., *GOS.* Nos. xxvi, xli (1925, 1928) and elsewhere, are very short, but some are fairly long; they are generally written in indifferent Sanskrit prose, with verse Mantras, some being entirely in verse. On Dhāraṇīs see Winternitz, *op. cit.* pp. 380 f. The Saṅgītis introduce the Buddha in an assembly of the faithful.

[8] *BGD.* introd., p. 22.

[9] Besides Dīpaṁkara Śrījñāna, the *Bstan-ḥgyur* has preserved numerous works under the names Dīpaṁkara, Dīpaṁkara-chandra, Dīpaṁkara-bhadra, and Dīpaṁkara-rakshita, who were probably not all identical. Dīpaṁkara-bhadra is mentioned also by Tāranātha (*Geschichte,* pp. 257, 264; *Edelst.* p. 95) as belonging to Western India. To Dīpaṁkara Śrījñāna Atīśa is also ascribed a *Charyā-gīti* (Cordier, p. 46).

is also designated by the Tibetan title of Atīśa, certainly belonged, according to the Tibetan tradition,[1] to Bengal. Sumpā informs us[2] that Dīpaṁkara was a high priest both at Vikramaśīla and Odantapurī, and that he was known also by the honorific epithet of Jovo (=Prabhu). He visited Tibet, lived, travelled, and worked there for some time,[3] and the large bulk of his original and translated writings testify to the assistance he rendered not only in propagating Tāntric Buddhism but also in rendering Indian works accessible in Tibetan.

Jñānaśrī-mitra, described[4] as a central pillar of the Vikramaśīla *vihāra* at the time of Chanaka of Magadha, was born in Gauḍa. He first joined the Śrāvaka school, but afterwards became a Mahāyānist and came to Vikramaśīla about the time when Dīpaṁkara Śrījñāna left for Tibet. He wrote a work on Buddhist logic, called *Kārya-kāraṇa-bhāva-siddhi*, which exists in Tibetan, and must have attained considerable reputation to be mentioned by Mādhava in the 14th century in his *Sarva-darśana-saṁgraha*.[5] He should be distinguished from Jñānaśrī, of whom ten Vajrayāna works exist in Tibetan.

Of the minor Buddhist writers, mostly Tāntric, who in all probability flourished in Bengal during these centuries, it is not necessary to give a detailed account here; for their writings appear to be of the same character and possess no distinctive interest. Among these may be mentioned Abhayākaragupta, who has more than twenty Vajrayānist works preserved in Tibetan, but four[6] of these are also available in Sanskrit. He is described[7] as a Buddhist

[1] See Cordier, *op. cit.* pp. 46, 88.

[2] *Op. cit.* p. xlvi, 118; also xxxvi, 95; *Tar.* 243. Dīpaṁkara Śrījñāna appears also to have been connected with the Somapurī-*vihāra* where he translated *Madhyamaka-ratna-pradīpa* of Bhāvaviveka (Cordier, *op. cit.* III. 299).

[3] Cf. *supra* pp. 144-45; *infra* Ch. XVII.

[4] *Tar.* 214 f.; Sumpā, *op. cit.* pp. xcviii, 118, 120.

[5] S. C. Vidyabhusan, *op. cit.* p. 341.

[6] These are: *Kāla-chakrāvatāra* (Sastri-*Cat.* I. 161; MS. dated 1125 A.D.), Paddhati commentary on *Buddha-kapāla-tantra* (*ibid.* pp. 163-64, MS. finished at Vikramaśīla in the 25th year of Rāmapāla's reign; Cordier, III, p. 212), *Vajrāvali-nāma-maṇḍalopāyika* (*ibid.* p. 153-61) and *Uchchhushma-jambhala-sādhana* (Śāstrī, *Nepal Catalogue*, II, p. 205=No. 152, in the *Sādhana-samuchchaya*).

[7] Sumpā, *op. cit.* pp. xcxviii, 63, 112, 120, 121; *Tar.* 250 f, *Edelst.* p. 109 f. Tāranātha believes that his father was a Kshatriya, his mother a Brāhmaṇī. He was well versed in Hindu Śāstras of the Tantras of the Tirthikas before he was converted, but studied the Buddhist Tantras in Bengal later on. S. C. Das in *JASB.* 1882, pp. 16-18, gives a slightly different account of Abhayākaragupta from Tibetan sources. He states that Abhayākaragupta was born in the middle of the 9th century in Eastern India near the city of Gauḍa, went to Magadha, became a priest to king Rāmapāla and, by his learning and other accomplishment

monk of "Baṅgala" born in a Kshatriya family at Jhārikhaṇḍa in Orissa; he flourished in the reign of Rāmapāla as Paṇḍita of Vajrāsana and Nālandā, becoming a high priest of Vikramaśīla, according to Sumpā Mkhan-po, at the time of Yakshapāla's dethronement by his minister Lavasena.[1] Divākarachandra, described as belonging to Bengal in the *Bstan-ḥgyur*[2] which includes one Heruka-sādhana and two translations of his, was according to Sumpā Mkhan-po[3] a disciple of Maitrī-pā, and lived in the reign of Nayapāla, but was driven away from Vikramaśīla by Dīpaṁkara.[4] Kumārachandra, described[5] as "an avadhūta of the Vikramapurī Vihāra of Bengal in Eastern Magadha," is responsible for three Tāntric Pañjikās (commentaries) preserved in Tibetan; Kumāravajra, also described as belonging to Bengal,[6] was mostly a translator, who has only one independent work on the Heruka-sādhana. Dānaśīla, similarly described as belonging to Bhagala in Eastern India[7] and to the Jagaddala *vihāra* in the east,[8] is mentioned as a translator by Sumpā.[9] He has about sixty Tāntric translations in Tibetan to his credit, but there is also a brief *Pustaka-pāṭhopāya*,[10] translated by himself into Tibetan, on the mode of beginning the reading of a

came to preside over the Vikramaśīla *vihāra*. He died before Rāmapāla abdicated in favour of his son Yakshapāla, and was succeeded by Ratnākaraśānti at Vikramaśīla.—In the *Bstan-ḥgyur* Abhayākaragupta is described as an inhabitant of Magadha (Cordier, II. 71, 255). See *IC*. III. 369-72.

[1] He appears to be different from Abhaya-paṇḍita, to whom about 108 Tāntric works are assigned in the *Bstan-ḥgyur*.

[2] Cordier, *op. cit.* p. 319; also pp. 83, 92 for the works.

[3] *Op. cit.* . pp. xlvii, 119, where the name is given as Devākara-chandra. See *Tar.* 244.

[4] A *Pāka-vidhi* by Paṇḍita-śrī-Divākarachandra is noticed in Śāstrī, *Nepal Cat.* II. 43-44; cf. P. C. Bagchi, *Dohākośa*, p. 8 (colophon), where the MS. is dated in 1101 A.D. He may be identical with Devākara-chandra, also chiefly a translator (5 works in Tibetan), or Devākara (two translated works, Cordier, p. 181), both of whom are described as Indian Upādhyāyas (Cordier, pp. 176, 181, 217, 277), but he may be different from Divākara-vajra (4 works, Cordier pp. 47, 48, 328, 329), who is described as a Mahābrāhmaṇa.

[5] Cordier, *op. cit.* p. 160; for the works see pp. 73, 169.

[6] *Ibid.* p. 33.

[7] *Ibid.* p. 188, also p. 63. Has Bhagala any connexion, as Rāhula Sāṅkṛityāyana suggests, with modern Bhagalpur? Or, is it another form of Baṅgala or Bhaṅgala by which Tāranātha and Sumpā mean Bengal? Tāranātha believes (*Geschichte*, pp. 204, 226) that Dānaśīla was a Kashmirian, and lived in the time of Mahīpāla of Bengal.

[8] Cordier, *op. cit.* p. 33.

[9] *Op. cit.* pp. xlvi, 115.

[10] See S. C. Vidyabhusan, *op. cit.* pp. 340-41; also *IHQ*. 1927, pp. 856-68 for a description of the work.

book. Putali (or Putuli, Puttali), mentioned[1] as a Buddhist Tāntric sage of Bengal, wrote a Vajrayānist work on Bodhichitta;[2] but Nāgabodhi (or Nāgabuddhi?), who is said[3] to have been born "in Śibśera in Baṅgala" and who served the later Nāgārjuna as a disciple when he was working alchemy in Puṇḍravardhana, left thirteen Tāntric works now preserved in *Bstan-ḥgyur*. It is not clear if Ṭaṅkadāsa (or Ḍaṅgadāsa)[4] was a native of Bengal, but he is described as a Vṛiddha-Kāyastha and contemporary of Dharmapāla of Bengal; he wrote at the Pāṇḍubhūmi *vihāra* a commentary, called *Suviśada-saṁpuṭa*, on the *Hevajra-tantra*. But Prajñāvarman, who is credited with two commentaries and two translations of Tāntric texts, is distinctly assigned to Bengal.[5] There are, however, some Buddhist Tāntric writers who worked in Vihāras situated in Eastern India, but there is no direct evidence that they were natives of Bengal. They are: Bodhibhadra of the Somapurī *vihāra*,[6] Mokshākaragupta, Vibhūtichandra of Jagaddala *vihāra*, and Śubhākara[7] also of the Jagaddala *vihāra*. Of these Mokshākaragupta wrote a work on Logic called *Tarka-bhāshā*,[8] and may be identical with the commentator of the same name on the *Dohā-kośa* in Apabhraṁśa.[9] Vibhūtichandra has a total of twenty-three Tāntric works,[10] of which seventeen are translations, including translations of two works of Lui-pā. Similarly, Vanaratna, who is mostly a translator, is vaguely described in the *Bstan-ḥgyur*[11] as belonging to

[1] Sumpā, *op. cit.* pp. lxxiii. 130. He is regarded as one of the 84 Mahāsiddhas; he was a Śūdra of "Bhaṅgala" (Grünwedel, *op. cit.* p. 216), with which Rāhula Sāṅkṛityāyana's description (p. 225) agrees.

[2] Cordier, *op. cit.* p. 245 (*Bodhi-chitta-vāyu-charaṇa-bhāvanopāya*).

[3] Sumpā, *op. cit.* pp. xii, 90; *Tār.* 86 f, 105. The Siddhāchārya Nāgabodhi (Grünwedel, *op. cit.* p. 214), a Brāhmaṇa of Western India and disciple of Nāgārjuna, is probably the same person (Rāhula Sāṅkṛityāyana's description agrees). For his works, see Cordier, pp. 137, 138, 142, 143, 167, 207, 209, 245.

[4] Sumpā, *op. cit.* pp. v. 144; Tāranātha, *Edelst.* p. 100.

[5] Cordier, *op. cit.* pp. 3, 4, 298. He hailed from Kāpaṭya in Bengal (Cordier. III. 399).

[6] *Ibid.* p. 98; two works. He may be the same as Bodhibhadra of Vikramaśila *vihāra* mentioned by Tāranātha (*Geschichte* pp. 259 f).

[7] *Ibid.* p. 293. He should be distinguished from Śubhākaragupta of Magadha, pupil of Abhayākaragupta and high priest of Vikramaśila, who flourished in the reign of Rāmapāla (Sumpā, *op. cit.* pp. cxxii, 120; *Tār.* 252, 261; S. C. Vidyabhusan, *op. cit.* p. 346).

[8] S. C. Vidyabhusan, *op. cit.* p. 346.

[9] Cordier, *op. cit.* p. 219.

[10] Cordier, *op. cit.* pp. 19, 21, 23, 49, 50, 126, 142, 178, 302, 365. Śāstrī, *Nepal Cat.* II. 244, notices an *Amṛita-karṇikā* commentary of Vibhūtichandra, in Sanskrit, on Nāma-saṅgīti according to Kālachakra-yāna. On Vibhūtichandra see N. N. Dasgupta in *IC.* v. 215-17.

[11] *Ibid.* pp. 17, 77.

Eastern India, but Sumpā Mkhan-po[1] informs us that he visited Tibet from the monasteries of Koki land.[2] Of some writers, again, we can infer their place of origin only indirectly from their works. Thus Kambala or Kambalāmbara-pāda, to whom six works chiefly on Heruka-sādhana are credited in Tibetan, wrote also a collection of Dohās, called *Kambala-gītikā*,[3] apparently in proto-Bengali; and one such Dohā (No. 8) occurs also in the *Charyācharya°*.[4] To this class belong several writers, but about some of them we have more definite information. These are Kukkuri-pāda, Śavari-(or Śavara)-pāda, Lui-pāda, Kṛishṇa-pāda and others; but since these writers, to whom Vajrayānist workers are credited in the *Bstan-ḥgyur*, are also counted among the eighty-four Siddhas and connected with popular Tāntric cults, especially the Mahāmāyā, the Yoginī-kaula and the Nātha cult, all of which possibly developed further out of Vajra-yāna and Mantra-yāna,[5] it would be better to take them up separately.

With these so-called Siddhāchāryas we enter upon a somewhat new phase of Bengal Tāntrism, although most of these thaumaturgists present a medley of doctrines, which had probably not yet crystallised themselves into well defined or sharply distinguished cults. The Vajra-yāna and Mantra-yāna as offshoots of Mahāyāna, were never at any stage separated by any clear line of demarcation. The same remarks would apply also to the various closely allied, perhaps concurrently existing, and presumably popular, cults.[6] which became associated with the names of the Siddhāchāryas and the Nātha-gurus, and which (whatever might have been their origin) show a clear

[1] *Op. cit.* p. lxix; *Tār.* 263.

[2] For Buddhist Tantra in eastern Koki land, see *Tar.* 267.

[3] *BGD.* introd., p. 27. On the legends of Kambala, who is counted as one of the Siddhas, see Grünwedel, in the work cited, pp. 175-76.

[4] *BGD.* Tāranātha (*Gesch.* 188, 191 f, 275, 324; *Edelst.* 53 ff) connects Kambala with Uḍḍiyāna and associates him with Lalitavarjra and Indrabhūti in the exposition of Hevajra. Sumpā (pp. x, 90, 94), believes that Kambala was a contemporary of Āryadeva. Rāhula Sāṅkṛityāyana makes Kambala a disciple of Vajraghaṇṭa of Varendra (flourishing under Devapāla, *c.* 810-50 A.D.), but belonging to Orissa.

[5] On the distinction, which however is not sharp, between Mantrayāna and Vajra-yāna, see Wint.-*Lit.* II. 387-88. Also P. C. Bagchi in Ch. XIII *infra.*

[6] With our present available materials the exact relationship of these various cults cannot be determined, but there can be no doubt that, whether Buddhistic or Brahmanical, they were intimately related, and their teachers figure indiscriminately in more cults than one.—In addition to the authorities cited above, all the Tibetan legends about the Siddhāchāryas will be found in *Die Geschichte der vierundachtzig Zauberer* (*Mahāsiddhas*), aus dem Tibetischen übersetzt von A. Grünwedel, in *Baessler-Archiv*, Band v (Leipzig and Berlin 1916), pp. 137-228 (hereafter cited as Grünwedel); in Tāranātha's *Edelsteinmine*, aus dem Tibetischen

admixture of Buddhist ideas[1] and claim as their teachers recognised expounders of Vajra-yāna and Mantra-yāna. We have in consequence a curious confusion, in the various traditions, between the early teachers of the different but closely related cults. We have, for instance, the traditions of more than one Śavara, Lui-pā, Saraha and Kṛishṇa, just in the same way as we have traditions of more than one Śāntideva, Śāntirakshita and Dīpaṁkara; while Lui-pā has been equated with Mīnanātha or Matsyendranātha, who is one of the acknowledged founders of both Yoginī-kaula and Nāthism. The difficulty is here perhaps greater than that of distinguishing between Mahāyāna and Vajra-yāna writers, where they might have been confused by similarity of names, and where, since the one system developed out of the other, it was not inherently impossible for a Mahāyānist to be a Vajrayānist. But in this case, as also sometimes in the other, it is not always possible to assume two or more sets of teachers having a common name or a common belief. To explain this confusion, therefore, one should presume a syncretic tendency, not unusual in the history of religious cults, to assimilate and identify the teachers of the different groups. This tendency must have been facilitated by the fact that these cults, collectively called Sahaja-siddhi, in their origin were not probably sharply differentiated, having developed under the same conditions and possibly out of the same source or sources. In the case of Nāthism especially, which was perhaps more popular than academic, this tendency of assimilating the recognised teachers of Buddhist Tāntrism is not unintelligible. Whether the Nāthism in its origin was a form of Tāntric Buddhism which transformed itself into Tāntric Śaivism or whether the process was otherwise, need not be discussed here; but it is clear that it assimilated rites and tenets from various sources, its curious legends belonging to no regular order.[2] In the same way it appropriated, or rather assimilated, its own Gurus to Vajrayānist teachers of repute, on the one hand, and to Śiva and his disciples, on the other.

One of the characteristics of Sahaja-siddhi is that it repudiates Mantra, Maṇḍala and other external means and modes of Vajra-yāna and Mantra-yāna, puts emphasis on Yogic practices and cultivation of mental powers, and, accepting their terminology, places different interpretations on such fundamental concepts as Vajra, Mudrā etc. The lands where this phase of Tāntrism was the most wide-spread, and perhaps where it originated, were Bengal and Assam. Most of

übersetzt von A. Grünwedel, Petrograd 1914 (Bibl. Buddhica xviii); and in Rāhula Sāṅkṛityāyana in *JA*. ccxxv, 1934, pp. 218-228 (hereafter cited as Rāhula).

[1] See *infra* Ch. XIII.

[2] See Gopal Haldar, *Gopichānd Legend*, in *PTOC*. VI (1933), p. 277.

the teachers, therefore, belong to these countries, from which their teachings must have spread in divergent forms to Nepal and Tibet; but the traditions concerning them became overlaid, obscure and confusing, and their works present a medley of Buddhism and Hinduism. The religious aspect of the question is not our concern here, but we shall give a brief survey of the important works and authors connected with these cults.

Kukkuri-pāda (or °pā), one of the eighty-four Siddhas, is mentioned by Tibetan tradition[1] as a Brahman of Bengal who introduced Mantra-yāna (Heruka-sādhana) and other Tantras from the land of Ḍākinī. This somewhat obscure account probably refers to the introduction of the cult of Mahāmāyā, with which his name is traditionally associated,[2] and which, judging from the titles of the works,[3] appears to form the theme of at least three out of his six Tāntric works in the *Bstan-ḥgyur*. He is also credited with two vernacular Dohās in the *Charyācharya*° (Nos. 2, 20).[4] Another early Siddhāchārya is Śavari-(or Śabara)-pāda, of whom it is recorded by Sumpā Mkhan-po[5] that he was a huntsman of the hills of "Baṅgala," who with his two wives, Loki and Guni, was converted by Nāgārjuna during the latter's residence in that country. The Tibetan sources,[6] again, place him as a contemporary of Lui-pā,

[1] Sumpā, *op. cit.* pp. vi, 113, 135, 145; Tāranātha (*Edelsteinmine*, pp. 104 f) adds that he taught the Tantras to Padmavajra, from whom they were handed down in succession to Tilli, Nāro and Śānti! The strange name Kukkuri-pā is explained by Sumpā by the legend that Kukkuri-pāda united in Yoga in the Lumbinī grove with a woman who was formerly a bitch. The same work (Sumpā Mkhan-po, pp. vi, 108, 145) speaks of a Kukuradāsa (=Kukurarāja?) also called Kukurāchārya as a Buddhist Tāntric sage, adept in Yoga and a great preacher, who was a lover of dogs!

[2] *Tar.* 275. According to Grünwedel, *op. cit.* p. 176, Kukhuri was a Brahman of the eastern land of Kapilaśakru; according to Rāhula, a Brahman of Kapilavastu and Guru of Mīna-pāda.

[3] One of these, *Mahāmāyā-sādhanopāyika*, is available in Sanskrit in *Sādhana-mālā*, II. 466-68 (No. 240).

[4] He is probably identical, as Cordier suggests (p. 109), with Kukura-pā or Kukura-rāja of whom eight Tāntric texts on various deities (Vajrasattva, Vairochana, Heruka etc.) are given in the *Bstan-ḥgyur*. This perhaps confirms Sumpā Mkhan-po's statement that he introduced various kinds of Tantra. See *Tar.* 188-89.

[5] *Op. cit.* pp. cxxi, 90. Elsewhere (pp. cxxi, 124) it is said that Śavari belonged to the hill tribe called Śavara. In Tāranātha the name is given as Śāvari. The legends of Śavari who is regarded as one of the 84 Mahāsiddhas are given in Grünwedel, *op. cit.* pp. 149-50.

[6] See P. C. Bagchi, introd. to *Kaula-jñāna*°, p. 27. Rāhula makes Śabara-pā disciple of Saraha and Guru of Lui-pā, his place of activity being given as Vikramaśīla.

making him[1] even a preceptor of Lui-pā in Tāntrism. Two vernacular Dohās of Śavari are also found in the *Charyācharya°* (Nos. 28, 50). It is probable, therefore, that he was connected with the new cults, although ten Vajrayānist works are assigned to him in the *Bstan-ḥgyur*.[2] He appears to the same as Śavarīśvara,[3] some of whose works in the *Bstan-ḥgyur* are concerned with Vajra-yoginī Sādhana, which king Indrabhūti of Oḍyān and his sister Lakshīṁkara made popular.[4]

But the most important name of this group is perhaps that of Lui-pā. He is credited with four Vajrayānist works in the *Bstan-ḥgyur*, of which one called *Abhisamaya-vibhaṅga* is said to have been revealed by him directly to Dīpaṁkara Śrījñāna in order that (according to the colophon to the text)[5] the latter might help its Tibetan translation. He was, therefore, in all probability an older contemporary of Dīpaṁkara and belonged to the end of the 10th and beginning of the 11th century.[6] Two of his vernacular Dohās

[1] Sumpā, *op. cit.* pp. 124, 135; Tāranātha, *Edelsteinmine*, pp. 20, 23. The relationship of the earlier Siddhas to one another in spiritual lineage is differently given in different traditional accounts. Their chronology, therefore, depending on their mutual relationship, is equally uncertain. On the question of the confusion of Śavari, Mahāśavara and Saraha, see below under Saraha.

[2] Cordier, *op. cit.* pp. 57, 58, 128, 198, 235, 296, 326, 335. Some are available in Sanskrit also, in *Sādhana-mālā*, II. 384-88 (Siddha-śavara), 456 (*ibid.*).

[3] But he is probably different from Mahāśavara, by which name Saraha (Rāhulabhadra) is also known (Cordier, *op. cit.* p. 221, 248, also p. 39). See below.

[4] Advayavajra, who belonged to Śavara-sampradāya (Cordier, p. 45) has about 22 works translated in the *Bstan-ḥgyur*, but some of his works are also available in Sanskrit. Twenty-two small Vajrayānist tracts of his are edited by H. P. Śāstrī in the *Advayavajra-saṁgraha*. Also in *Sādhana-mālā*, I. 47; II. 424, 490. His other name or title, Avadhūti-pā, probably indicates his connexion with the Avadhūti sect of Sahaja-siddhi, and this appears to be supported by his commentaries on the *Dohā-kośa* (ed. P. C. Bagchi, *JL.* XXVIII). Excepting his connexion with the Śavara-sampradāya, there is no direct evidence that he belonged to Bengal. One Advayavajra, however, without the title Avadhūti, but called a Brāhmaṇa, appears to have come from Bengal (Cordier, p. 250).—Rāhula makes Avadhūti-pā a disciple of Śānti-pā.

[5] M. Shahidullah, *op. cit.* p. 19, would explain the colophon differently, while H. P. Śāstrī thinks that Dīpaṁkara helped Lui-pā in writing this work. But see P. C. Bagchi, *Kaula-jñāna°*, introd., p. 28.

[6] M. Shahidullah (*op. cit.* p. 22), following Sylvain Lévi and Tāranātha, would place him much earlier in the 7th century. From Marāṭhi sources Matsyendranātha's date would be the end of the 12th century (S. K. Chatterji, *op. cit.* p. 122; D. R. Bhandarkar in *IC.* I. 723-24). But see P. C. Bagchi, *loc. cit.* for a criticism of these views. The approximate dates assigned by B. A. Saletore to Ādinātha, Gorakshanātha and others from South Indian tradition (*Poona Orientalist*, I. 16-22) do not conflict with our tentative chronology.

are given in the *Charyācharya*° (Nos. 1, 29) ;[1] but Haraprasād Śāstrī[2] speaks of an entire collection called *Luipāda-gītikā*. It is through these vernacular Dohās that he probably became one of the earliest founders of the Tāntric religion found in the *Dohā-kośas*. The Tibetan tradition mentions him as the Ādi-siddha, thus making him occupy the same position as the Indian tradition would ascribe to Mīnanātha or Matsyendranātha. It has been pointed out that the Tibetan translation of the name Lui-pā means Matsyodara or Matsyāntrāda ;[3] and Sumpā Mkhan-po[4] makes him, as the Indian tradition makes Matsyendranātha, a sage of the fisherman caste.[5] The Tibetan sources, again, place Lui-pāda in Bengal,[6] while all the Indian legends of Matsyendranātha are connected with the sea-board of Eastern India. The published Sanskrit texts of the school claim Matsyendranātha as the founder of the Yoginī-kaula system, while Tāranātha believes (*Geschichte*, p. 275 f) that Lui-pā introduced the Yoginī cult. On these, among other, grounds Lui-pā has been equated[7] with Matsyendranātha, the legendary fisherman of Chandradvīpa, who is the starting point of a new system of Tāntric thought and practice, connected with the Yoginī-kaula, Haṭha-yoga

[1] His *Tattva-svabhāva-dohākośa-gītikā-dṛishṭi* (Cordier, p. 230) is the same as Dohā No. 29; see *IHQ*. 1927, pp. 676 ff.

[2] *BGD*. introd., p. 21.

[3] Cordier, *op. cit.* p. 37; also P. C. Bagchi, *op. cit.* pp. 22-23; *Tar* 106 (Schiefner's note) ; Grünwedel, *op. cit.* p. 143, f.n. 2.

[4] *Op. cit.* pp. 124, 135

[5] But according to Rāhula, Lui-pā belonged to Magadha and was in his youth a scribe or Kāyastha to king Dharmapāla (769-809 A.D.) ; he was a disciple of Śabara-pā, who in his turn was a disciple of Saraha. That some of the teachers of these cults belonged to lower castes (probably an indication of their Buddhistic origin) is suggested by the names as well as the legends. Cf. the names Jālaṁdhara (fisherman), Tānti-pā (weaver), Hāḍi-pā (sweeper), Tilipā or Telipā (oilman), etc. But the names need not always imply caste, for Jālaṁdhara and Tilopā are described as Brahmans, Ḍombi-pā as a Kshatriya.

[6] Cordier, *op. cit.* p. 33. But Sumpā makes him (p. cxli) an employee of the king of Uḍḍiyāna; Tāranātha (*Edelst.* 20) makes him a scribe of Samantaśubha, king of Uḍyāna in the west; Rāhula describes him as a scribe of Dharmapāla and gives his place of activity as Magadha! See on this point P. C. Bagchi, *IHQ*. 1930, p. 583. H. P. Śāstrī (*JBORS*. 1919, p. 509) informs us that Lui-pā is even now worshipped in Rāḍhā and Mymensing. Wassilijev (note to *Tar.* 319) states that Lui-pā was born in Ujjayinī, while in Grünwedel, *loc. cit.* he is said to have lived under Indrapāla at Śāliputra (near Pāṭaliputra). In Tāranātha's opinion, Lui-pā was a contemporary of Asaṅga.

[7] The equation was first suggested by Grünwedel, *op. cit.* Cordier (p. 33) hesitates to accept the identification. See also Lévi-*Nepal*, I. 353, note 4. Tāranātha (*Edels.* pp. 120 f) distinguishes Lui-pā from Mīna, but he also distinguishes between Mīna and Machchhindra.

and Nātha cults of East Bengal and Kāmarūpa. Even if the identification is not accepted, it will certainly strengthen the suggestion, made above, of the tendency towards syncretic assimilation of the teachers of the various cults.

The homage paid by the Kashmirian Abhinavagupta in his *Tantrāloka*[1] would place Matsyendranātha earlier than the beginning of the 11th century; and if he is identical with Lui-pāda, his probable date would be the end of the 10th or the beginning of the 11th century. As the reputed founder of the new school of Sahaja-siddhi, he is connected with a series of teachers, whose writings are preserved mostly in the Apabhraṁśa and the vernacular, and who, as such, properly falls outside our province. But in its earlier stages the Sahaja-siddhi represented by these teachers starts apparently as a deviation from the Vajra-yāna and Mantra-yāna; while in these cults are to be found the sources of the Nātha cult, which calls itself Śivaite but which shows greater affinity with the Buddhist than with the Brahmanical Tantra. All the reputed Siddhāchāryas are, therefore, found credited with Vajrayānist works in the *Bstan-ḥgyur*. The only exception is perhaps Matsyendranātha, if he is not the same person as Lui-pāda; but we have a work on the Bodhichitta by Mīna-pāda,[2] who is described as an ancestor of Matsyendranātha. The cult must have been introduced early into Tibet and Nepal, where Matsyendranātha came to be identified with Avalokiteśvara, while in India his apotheosis occurred by his assimilation to Śiva.[3] There are some works, however, which profess to have been revealed (*avatārita*) by Matsyendranātha. Five of these texts written in Sanskrit have been published[4] from old Nepali manuscripts; and if the manuscript of the principal longest text, entitled *Kaula-jñāna-nirṇaya,* belongs to the 11th century (as its editor maintains), it must be taken as the earliest known work of the school. According to this work, Matsyendranātha belonged to the Siddha or Siddhāmṛita sect, primarily con-

[1] Ed. *KS.* I. 7 (vol. I, p. 25). In spite of conflict in the legendary accounts, the names Mīnanātha and Matsyendranātha belong probably to the same person.

[2] Cordier, *op. cit.* p. 237; the work is named *Bāhyāntara-bodhichitta-bandhopadeśa.*

[3] For a résumé of the legends of Matsyendranātha see Chintaharan Chakravarti in *IHQ.* 1930, pp. 178-81. The Yoginī-kaula cult must have been closely connected with Haṭha-yoga; for some of the Āsanas and Mudrās in Haṭha-yoga are expressly named after Matsyendranātha, and its tradition claims him as the first teacher of Haṭha-yoga after Ādinātha (*i.e.* Śiva). In the *Tantra-sāra* of Krishṇānanda, Mīnanātha or Matsyendranātha is connected with the worship of Tārā.

[4] Ed. P. C. Bagchi, *CSS.* 3, 1934.

nected with the Yoginī-kaula, the chief seat of which was Kāmarūpa. Although the word Kula in Brahmanical Tantra is often synonymous with Śakti, it is undoubtedly related here to the five Kulas of the Buddhist Tantra, representing the five Dhyāni-Buddhas; while the word Sahaja is equated with Vajra as a state to be attained by a method of Yoga called Vajra-yoga. There is, thus, a very considerable admixture of Buddhist Tāntric ideas and practices with those of the Brahmanical Tantra.

The next great Siddha of the school is Gorakshanātha who is described in most of the accounts as a disciple of Matsyendranātha. The legends, which must have originated in Bengal and spread in divergent forms to Nepal, Tibet, Hindustan, the Punjab, Gujarat and Mahārāshṭra, connect him and other Nātha-gurus with the Gopīchānd legend,[1] with the Yogī sect of the Punjab, and the Nātha-yogīs of Bengal. Perhaps he did not, as some of the legends suggest, strictly conform to the traditions of the Mantra-yāna; and it is no wonder that in Nepal and Tibet he is considered to be a renegade,[2] whose Yogīs passed from Buddhism to Śaivism simply to please their heretic rulers and gain political favours. Of Gorakshanātha no work[3] has been found, unless he is identical with the Goraksha of the *Bstan-ḥgyur*, who is responsible for one Buddhist Tāntric work.[4] If his alleged disciple[5] Jālandhari-pāda, who

[1] For an able treatment of the legend in its various forms, see Gopal Haldar in the work already cited. On Gorakshanātha as a deified protector of cattle, see *JL*. xix. 16 f.

[2] Lévi-*Nepal*. I. 355 ff; *Tar*. 255; *BGD*. 16. Goraksha has been identified (see note to *Tar*. 323) with Anaṅgavajra, but this may be an instance of the attempt to assimilate him to the well known Vajrayānist writer Anaṅgavajra, who was a disciple of Padmavajra and preceptor of Indrabhūti of Uḍḍiyāna. This Goraksha may be the Goraksha mentioned in *Bstan-ḥgyur*.

[3] A Sanskrit *Jñāna-kārikā*, in three Paṭalas, said to have been revealed by Gorakshanātha, is mentioned in Śāstrī, *Nepal Cat*. I. 79-90; this has been included by P. C. Bagchi in the work cited above, where the name of the teacher occurs as (p. 122) Mahā-machchhīndra-pāda and not as Gorakshanātha. A Sanskrit *Goraksha-saṁhitā* of late quasi-Hindu origin is supposed to embody his teachings. Also a *Goraksha-siddhānta* (ed. Gopinath Kaviraj, Part I, *SBS*.). The vernacular productions of the Goraksha school are of very late origin, and it would not be critical to assign any of them to the teacher.

[4] Called *Vāyu-tattva-bhāvanopadeśa* (Cordier, *op. cit*. p. 237). To his alleged disciple Chauraṅgin also is ascribed a work of the same name.

[5] Jālandhari (variant Jālandhara) is sometimes mentioned as a disciple of Indrabhūti of Uḍḍiyāna, while some popular legends identify him with Hāḍi-pā of the Gopīchānd story. According to Grünwedel, (*op. cit*. p. 189), Jālandhari was a Brahman of Thaṭa land, while *Tar*. 195, makes him a contemporary and Guru of Kṛishṇāchārya, and connects him (*Edelst*. 62 ff.) with the Gopīchānd legend of Bengal as Hāḍi-pā. According to the accounts of Tāranātha and Sumpā, his real name was Siddha Bālapāda, but he was called the sage of Jālandhara, a place

figures in the legends as the Guru of Gopīchānd, is the same person as Mahāpaṇḍita Mahāchārya Jālandhara, Āchārya Jālandhari, or Siddhāchārya Jālandhari-pāda of the *Bstan-ḥgyur*,[1] then he might be taken as the author of four Vajra-yāna works, including a commentary, called *Śuddhi-vajra-pradīpa*, on *Hevajra-sādhana*, the original being assigned to Saroruhavajra.[2]

To the other Siddhāchāryas of the Sahaja-siddhi, some of whom are also Gurus of the Nātha cult, numerous Buddhist Tāntric works are assigned in the *Bstan-ḥgyur*. Both Indian and Tibetan[3] traditions make Virūpa (or Viru-pā) a disciple of Jālandhara; but the latter tradition also appears to mention more than one Buddhist Tāntric sage of that name, of whom a junior and a senior Virūpa are distinguished.[4] One of these Virūpas was born in the east at "Tripura"[5] (Tippera ?) during the reign of Devapāla. The distinction, however, is not clear in the *Bstan-ḥgyur*, but it ascribes ten Vajra-yāna works to Āchārya or Mahāchārya Virūpa, and two collections of apparently vernacular Dohās and Padas (*Virūpa-pada-chaturaśīti* and *Dohā-kośa*) to Mahāyogin or Yogīśvara Virūpa.[6] Tilopā or Tailika-pāda,[7] another Siddhāchārya, is made by Tibetan

between Nepal and Kashmir, where he lived for some time. The Nagara Thaṭa was in Sindhu, where Jālandhara was born in a family of Śūdra merchants. He visited Uḍyāna, Napal, Avantī and Chāṭigrāma in Bengal where Gopīchānd, son of Vimalachandra, was the king. See *JASB*. 1898, p. 22. In Rāhulā's account Jālandhara is described as a Brahman whose disciples were Kaṇha-pā and Matsyendra! His Guru is called Kūrma-pā.

[1] Cordier, *op. cit.* pp 39, 60, 78, 241.

[2] *Ibid.* pp. 75, 78.

[3] Sumpā, *op. cit.* pp. lxxii, 109.

[4] *Ibid.* pp. lxxii, 102, 104, 109, 112. *Tar.* 162 ff. makes the senior Virūpa a disciple of Jayadeva Paṇḍita (the successor of Dharmapāla) and a fellow-student of Śāntideva. He mentions (p. 205) the junior Virūpa as a Siddhāchārya. Virūpa is connected with various forms of Vajra-yāna *sādhana* and mentioned as the preceptor of the Mahāsiddha Ḍombi-Heruka. Elsewhere (*Edelst.* 31) Tāranātha believes that Virūpa appeared thrice in this world! According to Cordier (*op. cit.* p. 30), and Grünwedel (*op. cit.* 147-48), Ḍombi-Heruka was a Kshatriya king of Magadha and exponent of Hevajra-siddhi (8 works in *Bstan-ḥgyur*). See *Edelst.* 34-35.

[5] Sumpā, *loc. cit.*; Grünwedel, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

[6] Cordier, *op. cit.* p. 223. H. P. Śāstrī (*BGD.* introd., p. 28) adds two others, viz.. *Virūpa-gītikā* and *Virūpa-vajra-gītikā*. But are these Pada-collections or Saṅgītis? One Dohā of Virūpa occurs in the *Charyācharya** (No. 3). For his Vajra-yāna works, see Cordier, *op. cit.* II. 57, 125, 176, 177, 182, 223, 224, 230.

[7] The name is given in various forms: Tilipā, Tillipā, Tillapa, Tilapa, Tillopa, Tailopa, Tellipā, Telopa, Teli-yogī. It is explained by Sumpā, fancifully, by the legend of his having joined in Yoga with a Yoginī who used to subsist in her early life by pounding sesame (*tila*)! Did he belong to the Teli caste?

sources a contemporary of Mahīpāla of Bengal;[1] and one of these traditions makes him a Brahman of Tsātigāon (Chittagong ?), who was converted under the name of Prajñābhadra.[2] Besides four Vajra-yāna works, a *Dohā-kośa* of his is preserved in Tibetan.[3] Tilo-pā's disciple Nāro-pā or Nāḍo-pā is also assimilated to well known Buddhist Vajra-yāna teachers. He is said[4] to have succeeded Jetāri as the north-door Pandit of Vikramaśīla as an adept in the Buddhist Āgama, and left the monastery in the charge of Dīpaṁkara in his seventieth year to become the high priest of Vajrāsana (Bodh-Gayā). One account makes him son of king Śākya Śubhaśānti-varman of the east (Prāchya), while another believes that he was the son of a Kashmirian Brahman, and became a Brahmanical Tīrthika Paṇḍita and then a Buddhist Siddha under the religious name of Jñānasiddhi or Yaśobhadra. As he appears to be identical with Nāḍa, described in the *Bstan-ḥgyur* as Śrī-mahāmudrāchārya, and with Nāḍa-pāda, described in the same work as Mahāchārya and Mahāyogin, he should be credited with nine Vajra-yāna Sādhanas,[5] some of which concern Heruka and Hevajra, as well as two Vajra-gītis[6] and a Pañjikā on *Vajra-pada-sāra-saṁgraha,* which last work, it may be noted, was undertaken at the request of

[1] *Tar.* 226; Sumpā, *op. cit.* pp. xli, 128.

[2] Cordier, *op. cit.* p. 43, assigns a Sahaja work alternately to Tailakapāda *alias* Prajñābhadra. It is possible that all these teachers had a popular name, as well as a Buddhist devotional name. There is another Siddhāchārya Tailika-pāda (Cordier, p. 79) who hailed from Oḍyāna. According to Grünwedel (*op. cit.* p. 170), Tilopa lived in Vishṇunagara and attained Mahāmudrā-siddhi. In Rāhula's list, Telopā is described as a Brahman disciple of Padmavajra and master of Nāro-pā.

[3] Cordier, *op. cit.* p. 223. Ed. P. C. Bagchi (Sanskrit text in *Dohā-kośa, JL.* XXVIII. 41-52, also pp. 1-4). The Vajra-yāna works are mentioned in Cordier, *op. cit.* pp. 43, 79, 223, 224, 239, 244.

[4] Sumpā, *op. cit.* pp. lv, 18, 45, 115, 117 (called Narota-pā). On pp. lxvii, 118 the name of the place where Nāropā practised Tantra is given as Phullahari to the west of Magadha. According to Grünwedel (*op. cit.* p. 168), Nāra was by caste a wine-seller, and lived in Sālaputra in East India. Tāranātha, however, believes that he was a Kashmirian Brahman and agrees with Sumpā's account in his *Edelst.* 74 ff.; see also his *Geschichte,* pp. 239 ff, 244 ff, 249, 328.

[5] Cordier, *op. cit.* pp. 16, 68, 70, 87, 92, 97, 125, 130, 132, 238. G. Tucci (*JRAS.* 1935, p. 677) speaks of another work of Nāropā which he discovered in Nepal. It is a Sanskrit text, called *Sekoddeśa-ṭīkā* on initiation according to Kāla-chakra. In Grünwedel, (*op. cit.* p. 168), Nāro, Nāro-pā, Narota-pā, Nāḍa, Nāḍa-pāda appear to be the same person who was also known as Jñāna-siddhi or Yaśobhadra.

[6] Cordier, pp. 220, 224. *BGD.* introd., p. 33 assigns to him a *Nāḍa-paṇḍita-gītikā.*

Vinayaśrī-mitra, a Bhikshu of Kanaka-stūpa Mahāvihāra of Paṭṭikeraka in Kashmir.[1]

Another important Siddhāchārya is Krishṇa or Krishṇa-pāda, known also by the Prakrit form of the name as Kāṇhu-pā. There must have been, as Haraprasād Śāstrī rightly conjectures, several Krishṇas or Kāṇhus. The *Bstan-ḥgyur* mentions a senior Krishṇa,[2] a Krishṇa from Orissa who was a translator,[3] as well as a Krishṇāchārya and a Krishṇa-vajra.[4] One Indian Krishṇa, again, wrote at Somapurī *vihāra*,[5] which was situated in Bengal. It is difficult to say which of these authors[6] should be (if at all) identified with Krishṇāchārya or Kāṇhapā of the Sahaja-siddhi and the Nātha cult, who is regarded as a disciple of Jālandhara-pā. According to Tāranātha, however, Krishṇāchārya, disciple of Jālandhari, belonged to Pādyanagara or Vidyānagara in the southern country of Karṇa;[7] but another Tibetan account informs us that his birthplace, as well as place of conversion, was Somapurī.[8] Eleven vernacular Dohās are given in the *Charyācharya*° under the names Kāṇhu, Krishṇāchārya-pāda, Krishna-pāda and Krishṇa-vajra,[9] as well as cited

[1] Cordier, *op. cit.* p. 68. This might refer to the Nāḍa-pāda of Kashmirian origin.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 159, called Mahāmahopādhyāya; the junior Krishṇa is mentioned at p. 82.

[3] *Ibid.* p. 82. He may be the same Kaṇha as is mentioned by Sumpā (pp. v, 110) as a Buddhist Tantric sage who was born in a Brahman family of Orissa (Oḍyāna?) and was initiated by Jālandhara; see also pp. lvii, 135, where the name is given as Kaṇha or Kaṇhāyā.

[4] *Ibid.* p. 227, where he is called a Mahāyogin, and a *Dohā-kośa* is assigned to him. He may be the same as our author. Also pp. 94, 101. Altogether three works are mentioned under his name by Cordier.

[5] *Ibid.* p. 166.

[6] To them altogether sixty-nine Buddhist Tantric works are ascribed in *Bstan-ḥgyur*. Some of these have been preserved also in Sanskrit in Nepal, *e.g.* *Vasanta-tilaka* (Cordier, p. 38; Krishṇa)=the same in Śāstrī's *Nepal Cat.*, II. 199 (incomplete): *Kurukulla-sādhana* (Cordier, p. 94; Krishṇavajra)=the same in *Sādhana-samuchchaya* (*Nepal Cat.* II. 201)=*Sādhana-mālā*, pp. 372-78; *Yoga-ratna-mālā Pañjikā* on Hevajra (Cordier, p. 67; Krishṇa or Kāṇhupāda)=*Nepal Cat.* ii. 44; Sastri-*Cat.* I. 114.

[7] *Edelst.* 69. M. Shahidullah takes it to be Orissa. Tāranātha (pp. 195, 197) distinguishes between a senior and a junior (*Tār.* 211, 234, 258, 275, 244) Krishṇāchārya. The junior, in his opinion, was responsible for Tantra works on Śambara, Hevajra and Jamāntaka; he belonged to the Brahman caste and was also a writer of Dohās.

[8] Grünwedel, *op. cit.* p. 163. The Indian legend of Kāṇupā in connection with Gopīchānd is given by M. Shahidullah, *op. cit.* pp. 26-27.

[9] Kāṇhu. Nos. 7, 9, 40, 42, 45; Krishṇāchārya-pāda, Nos. 11, 36; Krishṇapāda. Nos. 12, 13(?), 19; Krishṇavajra, No. 18. In No. 36, Jālandhari is mentioned with respect as a master. In Rāhula's list, Kāṇha-pā appears as a disciple of Jālandhara, a Kāyastha living at Somapurī during Devapāla's reign

under one or other of these names in its Sanskrit commentary. A *Dohā-kośa* in Apabhraṁśa by Kṛishṇāchārya also exists in the original and has been published.[1]

The problem of the identity of Saraha or Saraha-pāda, the next important teacher, whose other name is given as Rāhula-bhadra, is equally difficult. Sumpā Mkhan-po[2] describes him as a 'Brahman Buddhist sage', born of a Brahman and a Ḍākinī in the city of Rajñī in the eastern country. He was well versed in both Brahmanical and Buddhistic learning and flourished in the reign of Chandanapāla. He is said to have converted Ratnapāla and his ministers and Brahmans, and to have become the high priest of Nālandā. He learned the Mantra-yāna from Chove Sukalpa of Oḍivisa (Orissa), but afterwards visited Mahārāshṭra where he united in Yoga with a Yoginī who approached him in the guise of an archer's daughter. After having performed the Mahāmudrā with her, he became a Siddha and went by the name of Saraha. It is also recorded that he used to sing Dohās of Buddhism as a means of conversion. In the *Bstan-ḥgyur* there are about twenty-five Tāntric works assigned to him,[3] including more than half a dozen concerned with Dohākośa-gīti and Charyā-gīti.[4] An Apabhraṁśa *Dohā-kośa*[5] (with a Sanskrit commentary[6]) connected with his name has been

c. 900-950 A.D.). S. K. Chatterji (*op. cit.* pp. 120-22) identifies Kṛishṇāchārya with Kāṇhu-pāda.

[1] *BGD.* 123-32 (Kṛishṇāchārya-pāda); in M. Shahidullah, *op. cit.*, with the Tibetan version, pp. 72-122; in P. C. Bagchi, *Dohā-kośa*, cited above, pp. 121-136, also pp. 24-28. S. K. Chatterji (*infra*, p. 386) would place the Dohā-writer Kṛishṇāchārya at the end of the 12th century, on the ground that the Cambridge University Library MS. of the *Hevajra-pañjikā* by Paṇḍitāchārya Śrī-kṛishṇa-pāda is dated in the 39th year of Govindapāla (=*c.* 1199 A.D.), presuming our author's identity with this Kṛishṇa-pāda.

[2] *Op. cit.* pp. xxvii, 84, 85; Grünwedel, *op. cit.* pp. 150-51, as one of the 84 Siddhas.

[3] One Vajrayānist Sanskrit text of Saraha-pāda's given in *Sādhana-mālā*, I. 79. Another in *Sādhana-samuchchaya*, 176.

[4] Cordier, *op. cit.* pp. 212, 220, 221, 222, 231, 232, 247.

[5] *BGD.* 77-132 (called Sarojavajra; 32 Dohās); in M. Shahidullah, *op. cit.* pp. 123-234; in P. C. Bagchi, *op. cit.* pp. 52-120, also pp. 5-9, 28-32.

[6] The commentator Advayavajra calls his author Sarojavajra, Saroruha and Saroruhavajra. This Advayavajra is probably a later writer, different from the Vajrayānist author of the same name, who is also called Avadhūti-pāda (see *supra* p. 341, f.n. 4). He belonged to Śarideśa in Bengal (Cordier, *op. cit.* pp. 232, 250).—Saroruha is distinguished from Saraha by Tāranātha in both his works. In Rāhula's list, Saraha occurs as the Ādi-Siddha, having three disciples Buddha-jñāna, Nāgārjuna and Śabara-pā, which Śabara-pā in his turn is mentioned as the Guru of Lui-pā. Saraha further figures as a Brahman of Nālandā, flourishing in the reign of Dharmapāla (*c.* 770-810 A.D.).

published; and four of his Dohās occur in *Charyācharya*° (Nos. 22, 32, 38, 39), where he is called Saraha-pāda. Cordier is probably right[1] in his suggestion that there were several Sarahas, who are described in the *Bstan-ḥgyur* variously as Mahābrāhmaṇa, Mahāchārya, Mahāyogin or Yogīśvara, as belonging to Oḍḍiyāna[2] and also as Mahāśavara and once as a descendant of Kṛishṇa,[3] but it is difficult to distinguish them. Tāranātha, however, distinguishes two Sarahas, one of whom, the junior, was otherwise called Śābari,[4] while the other was named Rāhulabhadra.[5] It is likely that the Siddhāchārya Saraha, to whom the Dohās can be legitimately ascribed, was a different person from Saraha-Rāhulabhadra,[6] the Vajrayānist author of the Sādhanas, and that both are to be distinguished from Saroruhavajra, also called Padmavajra, who is known in the history of Buddhist Tāntrism as one of the pioneers of Hevajra-tantra and as the Guru and Paramaguru respectively of Anaṅgavajra and Indrabhūti of Oḍḍiyāna.

Of those minor personalities of this group, who probably belonged to the east, only a brief mention may be made here. It is not clear if all of them belonged to Bengal. Garbhari-pā or Garbha-pāda, popularly called Gābhur Siddha,[7] wrote a work on Hevajra and a Vajra-yāna commentary; Kila-pāda,[8] described as a descendant of Lui-pāda, is credited with a *Dohācharyā-gītikā-dṛishṭi*; Amitābha[9] commented upon the *Dohā-kośa* of Kṛishṇavajra; Karmari, Karmāra or Kamari, a descendant of Virūpa, was the author of one Vajrayāna work;[10] Vīṇāpāda, also a descendant of Virūpa, but des-

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 232.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 375. Tāranātha (*Edelst.* 10) believes that Rāhulabhadra, with whom he identifies the younger Saraha, was born in Oḍiviśa. He makes Lui-pā a disciple of this sage.

[3] Cordier, *op. cit.* pp. 107, 212, 220, 221, 222, 247, 248. See M. Shahidullah, *op. cit.* pp. 29-30.

[4] Cordier, *op. cit.* p. 232. Cf. *Tar.* 66. The Siddhāchārya Rāhula, according to Grünwedel (*op. cit.* p. 189) was a Śūdra of Kāmarūpa.

[5] *Edelst.* 20; cf. *Tar.* 105.

[6] *Tar.* 66, 73, 105. Rāhulabhadra is given as an *alias* of Saraha in Cordier, *op. cit.* p. 64 (*Vajrayoginī-sādhana*).

[7] Cordier, *op. cit.* p. 225; he is probably the same as Garvari-pāda, p. 78; one work each in Cordier. His place of activity is given as Bodhinagara by Rāhula.

[8] *Ibid.* p. 234. Called also Kila-pā or Kirava. According to Grünwedel (*op. cit.* pp. 208 ff.), he belonged to the royal family of Grahara, with which description Rāhula appears to agree.

[9] Cordier, *op. cit.* p. 277.

[10] *Ibid.* p. 241. Grünwedel, *op. cit.* p. 188, informs us that Karmāra was a blacksmith of Sāliputra in Magadha, and was also known as Kampari. In Rāhula's list Karmāra-pā also appears as a blacksmith of Sāliputra.

cribed[1] as a Kshatriya prince of Gahura who was fond of the Vīṇā,[2] wrote works on Vajraḍākinī and Guhyasamāja, as well as one Dohā (No. 17) given in the *Charyācharya°*; Kaṅkaṇa, a descendant of Kambala-pā, composed one Dohā to be found in the *Charyācharya°* (No. 44) and a *Charyā-dohākośa-gītikā*;[3] Dārika or Dāri-pāda,[4] also a Mahāsiddha, variously described as a disciple of Lui-pā and Nāropā, was responsible for twelve Vajra-yāna works in the *Bstan-ḥgyur*[5] and one Dohā in the *Charyācharya°* (No. 34); and Dharmapāda (also called Guṇḍarīpāda),[6] a descendant of Kṛishna, has twelve Vajra-yāna works in the *Bstan-ḥgyur* and two Dohās in the *Charyācharya°*. None of their works, except the Apabhraṁśa Dohās mentioned, is available in print, and exists only in Tibetan.

It will be seen that Bengal had a very large share in the cultivation and spread of this peculiar and prolific Buddhist and allied Tāntric literature, which in all probability received encouragement from the Buddhist kings of the Pāla dynasty. But it is remarkable that with the advent of the Sena kings, who had Vaishṇavite leanings, this literature and culture went underground for all time.[7] We hear of no suppression or persecution of Buddhism under the overlordship of the Senas, but it was probably a part of their policy to encourage Brahmanical studies as a reaction against the Buddhistic tendencies of the Pāla kings. There cannot be any doubt that under the new regime of the Sena kings, non-Buddhistic Sanskrit literature and culture in Bengal received a fresh impetus. This might have partly been also a result of the general revival of Sanskrit learning, probably under similar circumstances, in Kashmir, Kanauj, Dhārā, Kalyāṇa, Mithilā and Kaliṅga. But the entire literary output of Bengal in this period covers practically the reigns of two kings only, Vallālasena

[1] Cordier, *op. cit.* p. 238. In Rāhula's list Vīṇā-pā is a disciple of Bhadra-pā and a prince of Gauḍa.

[2] Sumpā, *op. cit.* pp. cxviii, 125.

[3] *Op. cit.* p. 231. He is counted as one of the eighty-four Mahāsiddhas. On the legends of Kaṅkaṇa see Grünwedel, *op. cit.* pp. 174-75.

[4] *Tar.* 127, 177, 249, 278; Grünwedel, *op. cit.* p. 215. He is said to belong to Sāliputra in the time of Indrapāla. See also *BGD.* 30.

[5] Cordier, *op. cit.* pp. 17, 33, 34, 59, 212, 219, 237.

[6] *Ibid.* p. 241. *BGD.* introd., p. 250. He is probably different from Dharmadāsa mentioned by Sumpā (*op. cit.* pp. xxxiv, 99), who was born in many countries and erected a temple to Mañjughosha. In Rāhula's list Dharma-pā and Gundari-pā are distinguished. Dharma-pā, according to Grünwedel (*op. cit.* p. 190), was a Brahman of Bodhinagara.

[7] The labours of Haraprasād Śāstrī and others have made it clear that Buddhism did not entirely disappear but lived, and is still living, in a disguised form in Bengal. The theory of its being persecuted out of the land, therefore, is hardly maintainable.

and Lakshmaṇasena, and it confines itself chiefly to Brahmanical ritualism and poetry; the New Logic, Brahmanical Tantra and sectarian Vaishṇavism emerging about three centuries later with the consolidation of the Muhammadan rule. In the meantime the Bengali language and literature, which were concerned in this period possibly with lost songs, hymns, and ballads on the themes of Rādhā-kṛishṇa, Gopīchānd, Lāusena, Lakshīndhara, Śrīmanta and Kālaketu, were perhaps slowly characterising themselves, so that from the uncertain beginnings of the *Charyācharya°*, they were transformed in the 14th century into the definite articulation of the *Śrī-kṛishṇa-kīrttana*. This story belongs to another chapter, and we shall see that, even in its beginnings, the vernacular literature did not fail to exercise some influence on the theme, temper, and expression of the contemporary Sanskrit literature.

One of the objects of the Brahmanical ritualistic writings, which was meant to regulate the daily life of the people and in which the authors of this period and their royal patrons took undoubted interest, might have been to counteract the social and religious disturbances with which Buddhism might have threatened the very basis of the Hindu society. During the reign of the Pāla kings, whose official religion might have been Buddhism but who do not appear to have been intolerant of other faiths, we hear of only one well known person, Bhavadeva Bhaṭṭa, who was an antagonist of Buddhism and heretic dialecticians and composed works on Brahmanical ritualism. In the Sena period such protective works were multiplied, but we hear of no avowed hostility towards non-orthodox systems. The attitude is intelligible when we consider the possibility of an accommodating spirit which in course of time appropriated reversed the process. Even in the Pāla period, we have seen, the Buddhist gods into the Hindu pantheon and which also sometimes Buddhist and Śivaite Tantras attempted to assimilate instead of being hostile to each other. As on the one hand, Matsyendranātha was equated with the Buddhist Lui-pāda and transformed into Avalokiteś-vara, while the Buddha himself was honoured by Jayadeva with a place in the list of the Avatāras of Kṛishṇa, we find, on the other hand, Mahākāla and Gaṇapati worshipped and awarded several Sādhanas[1] by Buddhist writers, and the Liṅga cult and Śivaite gods recommended in the Buddhistic *Saṁvarodaya* Tantra.[2]

The Dharma-śāstra works of this period are, therefore, written more from the practical than the academic point of view, and consist of ritualistic manuals prescribing the various pious duties and

[1] *Sādhana-mālā*, II Nos. 300-06, and 307. [2] Wint.-*Lit.* II. 400.

ceremonies. The earliest of these appear to be the *Hāralatā* and the *Pitṛi-dayita* of Aniruddha, both of which have been considerably used as authoritative by Raghunandana. The first work[1] deals with the observance of impurity (Aśaucha) consequent upon birth and death, its duties and prohibitions, the period for which it is to be observed, the persons who are exempted from observing it and other relevant topics. The second work,[2] intended for the Sāmavedic followers of Gobhila, is concerned chiefly with rites and observances connected with Śrāddha or funeral ceremony; but it includes a treatment of general duties like Mouth-washing (Āchamana), Teeth-cleansing (Danta-dhāvana), Ablution (Snāna), daily prayers (Sandhyā), Offering to Pitṛis and Viśve-devāḥ (Tarpaṇa and Vaiśvadeva), the periodical Pārvaṇa-śrāddha, as well as an eulogy of gifts. Both the works are in prose and contain a large number of passages quoted from old and new writers. The closing verse of the *Hāralatā* tells us that Aniruddha was a resident of Vihārapāṭaka on the bank of the Ganges and that he was versed in the doctrines of Bhaṭṭa (Kumārila). The colophons to the two works supply the further information that he was Dharmādhyaksha or Dharmādhikaraṇika (Judge), as well as a great teacher (Mahāmahopādhyāya) of Champāhaṭṭi, from which place[3] a section of Varendra Brahmans derive their designation. Besides the Purāṇas and older Dharma-śāstra authors, Aniruddha quotes more recent authorities, among whom he mentions Bhojadeva and Govindarāja in his *Hāralatā*. This would fix the upper limit of his date at 1100 A.D.; and the lower limit is supplied by the citations of Raghunandana (mentioning both the works and the author) and Govindānanda (calling the author Gauḍa) at about the beginning of the 16th century. Since the *Hāralatā* is named as an authority in the *Śuddhi-viveka* of Rudradhara, the lower limit may be pushed back to the second quarter of the 15th century; while three quotations from the

[1] Ed. Kamalkrishna Smrititirtha, Bibl. Ind., Calcutta 1900. The work is sometimes also called *Śuddhi-viveka* (Mitra, *Notices*, II, No. 949, p. 338, also No. 1001, p. 372), but this is only a portion of the work, also noticed in Sastri-*Cat.* III. 337, No. 2266.

[2] Ed. *SPS.* No. 6, Calcutta (no date). It may or may not be the same work as the *Karmopadeśinī Paddhati* (see Eggeling, *op. cit.* III. 474, No. 1553/481), for only a portion of this text is found in the printed edition. The colophon of this India Office MS. styles the author Dharmādhikaraṇika or Judge, while the colophon to the printed text of the *Hāralatā* describes him as Dharmādhyaksha, which has apparently the same meaning. The colophons to both the works designate him as Champāhiṭi- (or Champāhaṭīya, Champāhaṭṭīya-) mahāmahopādhyāya.

[3] That the place was in Varendra appears from its mention in the Manahali cp. of Madanapāla (*GL.*, 147 f, at p. 154).

Hāralatā having now been identified[1] in a manuscript of the *Śuddhi-ratnākara* of Chaṇḍeśvara preserved at the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, it is claimed that the lower limit should come up to the middle of the 14th century. All this makes it likely that he was identical with the Aniruddha who is extolled by Vallālasena in his *Dāna-sāgara* not only as a scholar far-famed in the Varendrī land for his piety and knowledge of the Veda and Smṛiti, but also as his own Guru from whom he learnt the Purāṇa and Smṛiti and at whose instance his own work itself was written. This would place Aniruddha's literary activity about the middle of the 12th century.[2]

Aniruddha's royal disciple, Vallālasena, appears to have composed four works, of which two are known to exist. His *Āchāra-sāgara* and *Pratishṭhā-sāgara*[3] are mentioned as already composed in verses 56 and 55 respectively of his *Dāna-sāgara*; and the former work is also known from citations in the *Smṛiti-ratnākara* of Vedāchārya and in the *Madana-pārijāta*[4] of Viśveśvara Bhaṭṭa. But these two works of Vallālasena have not yet been recovered. His *Dāna-sāgara*, according to the author's own statement, was written under the instruction (*guroḥ śikshayā*) of his Guru Aniruddha, but Raghunandana believes[5] that it was the work of Aniruddha Bhaṭṭa himself. The work is, as its name implies, an extensive digest, in seventy sections,[6] of matters relating to gifts, the author himself informing us (v. 53) that he has dealt with 1375 kinds of gift. It deals with the merits, nature, objects, utility, times and places of gift, bad gifts and prohibited gifts, rites and procedure

[1] By Bhavatosh Bhattacharya in *JBORS*. XXIII. 138-42.

[2] In *Proc. ASB*. 1869, p. 137, a *Chāturmāshya-paddhati* by Aniruddha is noted, while Mitra (*Notices*, VIII. 175, No. 2700) mentions a *Bhagavat-tattva-mañjarī* on Vaishṇava theology. No personal details of the author are given, and it is doubtful if they are to be credited to our Aniruddha.

[3] From the author's own remarks it appears that the topic of gifts made in different parts of the year is dealt with in the first work, while the second work treats of the dedication of reservoirs and temples.

[4] See Kane, *op. cit.* p 340.

[5] *Ekādaśī-tattva*, ed. Jivananda Vidyasagar, Vol. ii, p. 44. That Vallālasena himself was a man of letters need not be doubted, for one of his verses is quoted in the *Sadukti-karṇāmṛita* of Śrīdharadāsa .

[6] MSS. in Eggeling, *op. cit.* III. 542, No. 1704-05/719-20 (Bengali MS.); Mitra, *Notices*, I. 191, No. 278; H. P. Śāstrī, *Notices*, 2nd Series, i, p. 170 (extracts in all these). There is a post-colophon statement in the India Office MS. which says that the work was completed in Śaka 1091 (=1169 A.D.). R. L. Mitra makes out the date to be Śaka 1019, which Aufrecht (*ZDMG*. XLI. 329) accepts, correcting the India Office MS. date; but see R. G. Bhandarkar, *Report 1887-91*, pp. lxxxii-xci. The work is quoted five times by the Maithila Chaṇḍeśvara in his *Kṛitya-ratnākara* (ed. Kamalkrishna Smrititirtha, Bibl. Ind., p. 641; cf. *JASB*. 1915, p. 382), and several times by Raghunandana (*ibid*, p. 363).

connected with the making and accepting of gifts, the sixteen kinds of great gifts (Mahādāna) and the large number of lesser gifts, together with an enumeration of the Purāṇas and their extent. It gives valuable information regarding the texts of many works as they existed in the author's time. His *Adbhuta-sāgara,* which has been printed,[1] is an equally extensive work on omens and portents, their effects, and means of averting them. It is divided into three parts according as the portents are celestial (appertaining to stars and planets), atmospheric (such as rainbow, thunder, lightning and storm) and terrestrial (such as earthquake). As in the case of the *Dāna-sāgara* it attempts to cover, with copious quotations drawn from a very large number of authors and works, the varied aspects of the subject and bears evidence to the industry and learning of the compiler. It was probably left unfinished by the author and completed by his son Lakshmaṇasena.[2] Although not a Brahman himself, Vallālasena received as much recognition of his work in Bengal and outside as any professional Brahman writer of this period.

Both Bengal and Mithilā claim Guṇavishṇu, son of Dāmuka and author of a work on Vedic ritual entitled *Chhāndogya-mantra-bhāshya.*[3] The Bengali editor of his text makes out a good case for Bengal's claim; but the evidence adduced cannot be regarded as completely decisive. It is probable that he flourished some time before Halāyudha who makes considerable use of this work in his own similarly planned *Brāhmaṇa-sarvasva,*[4] but Guṇavishṇu need not be much earlier. Guṇavishṇu's work is a commentary

[1] Ed. Muralidhar Jha, Prabhakari and Co., Benares 1905. The work is quoted twice by Raghunandana (*JASB.* 1915, p. 363).

[2] We are told in the opening verses of the work itself that it was begun in Śaka 1089 (=1168 A.D.), but was left unfinished and completed after his death by his son Lakshmaṇasena, whom he had raised to the throne and from whom he had extracted a promise to finish the work. The India Office MS. of the work (Eggling, *op. cit.* v. 1197, No. 3104/712—Bengali MS.) is incomplete at the beginning and at the end, but the two Deccan College MSS. (Nos. 801 of 1884-87 and 231 of 1887-91) give the verse (see R. G. Bhandarkar, *loc. cit.*), and so do the printed text and the two Dacca Univ. MSS. No. 1246 (Bengali MS. dated Śaka 1737), 2314 (Devanāgarī, dated Saṁvat 1793). In the text of the *Adbhuta-sāgara* itself there is mention of Śaka 1082 and 1090 in the sections on the portents of the Saptarshi and of the planets Ravi and Bṛihaspati respectively (see M. Chakravarti, *JASB.* 1912, pp. 343-44). Cf. *supra,* pp. 230 ff.

[3] Ed. Durgamohan Bhattacharya, *SPS.* No. 19, Calcutta 1930. Also ed. Paramesvar Sarma in the Maithila Granthamālā, Darbhanga, Śaka 1828=1906 A.D. See description of its MS. in Eggeling, *op. cit.* I. 47, No. 280/2321a.

[4] Halāyudha and Guṇavishṇu are mentioned together in the same verse in an anonymous Bengal commentary on the Rudrādhyāya (Yajurveda), noticed in *VSP.-Cat.,* introd., p. viii. Guṇavishṇu is quoted by Raghunandana. For other

in eight parts on selected Vedic Mantras (about 400) used in the Sāmavedic Gṛihya rites. It consists of eight sections, dealing first of all with the sacrament of marriage and with all the rites connected with the child from its conception (Garbhādhāna) to the end of the period of Vedic study (Samāvartana), exactly in the same order and with the same nomenclature as those of Bhavadeva's *Chhāndoga-karmānushṭhāna-paddhati* mentioned above;[1] but it also includes, after Aniruddha's *Pitṛi-dayita*, a treatment of daily Prayers (*Sandhyā*), Ablution (*Snāna*), Vaiśvadeva, offering to the Pitṛis (*Śrāddha*), as well as a commentary on the Purusha-sūkta and its application to human sacrifice. It is probable that the commentator found the *Mantras* already embodied and handed down by a traditional Mantra-pāṭha, which Aniruddha might have also used; for all the *Mantras* commented upon cannot be traced in the *Chhāndogya-brāhmaṇa* or *Mantra-brāhmaṇa*, on which also Guṇavishṇu appears to have written a commentary,[2] but of which the arrangement is different. It is noteworthy that Sāyaṇa undoubtedly shows his acquaintance with Guṇavishṇu's °*Mantra-bhāshya*[3] which must have, therefore, attained wide popularity by the 14th century.

The most important writer of this group is undoubtedly Halāyudha, but unfortunately all his works have not survived.[4] The few facts known of him are given in the opening verses of his *Brāhmaṇa-sarvasva* His father Dhanañjaya, of the Vatsa-*gotra*, married Ujjvalā, and became a Dharmādhyaksha or Judge. Halāyudha had two elder brothers, Īśāna and Paśupati. The former wrote a Paddhati on the rites relating to the *Āhnika* or daily devotional observances of Brahmans (*śl.* 24); while the latter wrote also a Paddhati on *Śrāddha* and kindred topics (*śl.* 24; also Benares ed. p. 124), as well as another on *Pāka-yajña* (*śl.* 43). In his early years Halāyudha was appointed a Rāja-paṇḍita; in youth he was raised by king Lakshmaṇasena to the position of Mahāmātya, and in mature years he was confirmed as a Dharmādhikārin or Dharmādhyksha (*śl.* 10, 12, 14).[5] The Paddhati of Īśāna is lost, as well as

references see Durgamohan Bhattacharya's edition cited above. The learned editor places Guṇavishṇu in the reign of Vallālasena (introd. pp. xxiii, xxxv).

[1] See *supra* p. 322.

[2] *BCL.-Cat.* p. 112, No. 9807a. Guṇavishṇu also appears (Darbhanga ed. p 174) to have written a commentary on *Pāraskara Gṛihya-sūtra.*

[3] Sāyaṇa does not mention Guṇavishṇu, but cites him as *kechit*. The citations closely correspond.

[4] For an account of Halāyudha, see M. Chakravarti in *JASB.* 1915, pp. 327-336; Kane, *op. cit.* pp. 296-301.

[5] In the colophons he is also called Āvasthika, Mahādharmādhyaksha, Mahādharmādhikṛita and Dharmāgārādhikārin. See *IC.* I. 502-5 where Halāyudha

those of Paśupati,[1] but a *Daśa-karma-paddhati* on the Gṛihya ceremonies according to the Kāṇva-śākhā of the Śukla-Yajurveda is found ascribed to a Rāja-paṇḍita Paśupati in some manuscripts of the work.[2]

Halāyudha informs us (*śl.* 19) that besides the *Brāhmaṇa-sarvasva,* he wrote *Mīmāṁsā-sarvasva,*[3] *Vaishṇava-sarvasva, Śaiva-sarvasva* and *Paṇḍita-sarvasva.*[4] The last two works are quoted by Raghunandana,[5] but none of these works appears to have come

is made out to be a Vārendra Brahman and distinguished from Halāyudha of Dakshiṇa Rāḍhā.

[1] One Paśupati is cited several times by Raghunandana (*JASB.* 1915. pp. 367-68), but his works are not mentioned. In the *Sadukti-karṇāmṛita,* a verse (ii. 10. 5) is attributed to Paśupatidhara, but there is no reason to hold that he is identical with our Paśupati. On verses quoted from Halāyudha in this anthology, see below.

[2] Mitra, *Notices,* II. 5, No. 528 (*Daśa-karma-paddhati*), the opening verse of which names the author as Paśupati and describes him as Bhūpati-paṇḍita. This may or may not be the same work as Nos. 257 and 491 (beginning lost) of the Calcutta Sanskrit College (*Descriptive Cat.,* pp. 230-32, 441), called *Daśa-karma-paddhati,* in which the opening verse is missing, but the author's name is given in the colophon as Rāja-paṇḍita Paśupati. But there is no ground, except that of similarity of names, for identifying the authors of these two works with our Paśupati. Mitra's MS. No. 742 in the same volume of the *Notices,* called *Vivāha-paddhati,* may be an abstract of his MS. No. 528 mentioned above; it is also ascribed to Paśupati. The anonymous Calcutta Sanskrit College MS. No. 244 (p. 220) may be a version of this latter work, while the incomplete MS. No. 304 (p. 280), entitled *Daśa-karma-dīpikā,* which has no colophon and gives no name of the author, deals only with Marriage and Chaturthī-homa. A MS. of Paśupati's *Śrāddha-paddhati* is mentioned in *JASB.* 1906, p. 170, but of this nothing is known.

[3] Mitra (*Notices,* IV. 102, No. 1507), as well as M. Chakravarti (*JASB.* 1915, pp. 337-38), describes a fragmentary *Mīmāṁsā-sarvasva,* which is a commentary on the Mīmāṁsā-sūtra (going up to iii 4) ; Mitra ascribes it to Halāyudha. But there is no colophon and no indication of authorship in the work. A *Mīmāṁsā-śāstra-sarvasva,* ascribed to Halāyudha, is edited by Umesh Misra in *JBORS.* XVII (1931), pp. 227, 413; XVIII (1932), p. 129. It is a running commentary on the Adhikaraṇa-sūtras up to the end of iii. 4. From an account of the work given by the editor (*JBORS.* xx. 26-32), it appears that the edition is based on a corrupt and modern Maithili MS. belonging to the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal; but the editor expresses his "grave doubts" about Halāyudha's authorship, and in the MS. itself the name of the author is missing. In the editor's opinion, the work makes use of Pārthasārathi Miśra's *Śāstra-dīpikā*; it is thus a fairly late compilation. (Index to the work in the same journal, App. 1-17).

[4] A MS. of a *Paṇḍita-sarvasva* is noticed in *TCM.* 1919-22, p. 5162, No. 3458; also *M.-Cat.* IV. Pt. i (B), Madras 1928. The work deals miscellaneously with the usage of Varṇas and Āśramas, Tithi, Śuddhi, time for Śrāddha and other ceremonies, and so forth; but it gives no name of the author. From the extracts given in the Catalogue the question of authorship cannot be determined.

[5] *JASB.* 1915, p. 329, 367, 372; see Raghunandana's *Tattvas,* ed. Jivananda Vidyasagar, I. 389, 531.

down to us. The *Brāhmaṇa-sarvasva,* which has been printed,[1] is a work of great repute in Bengal. Halāyudha informs us that he wrote this work because he found that the Brahmans of Rāḍhā and Varendra did not study the Veda and therefore did not know the Vedic rites properly. Its main object is to supply a guide, meant for the Śukla-Yajurvedic Brahmans of the Kāṇva-śākhā, to a knowledge of the meanings of the Vedic Mantras employed in the daily (*Āhnika*) rites and the periodical domestic (*Gṛihya*) ceremonies known as Saṁskāras. Accordingly it deals in forty sections with the various daily duties, such as the morning ablution, prayers, hospitality, the study of the Veda, and daily offerings to the Pitṛis, and then proceeds to the treatment of the periodical Āchāras including the ten sacraments of a Brahman's life. As every such rite involves recitation of the Vedic Mantras, their explanation (Mantra-bhāshya) forms the chief feature of the work. He acknowledges handsomely his indebtedness to Uvaṭa and Guṇavishṇu, but he appears to have made considerable use also of the *Chhāndoga-pariśishṭa* of Kātyāyana and the *Gṛihya-sūtra* of Pāraskara. Our Halāyudha should be distinguished from several Halāyudhas who also wrote on Dharmaśāstra,[2] as well as from the lexicographer, grammarian and prosodist Halāyudha, who wrote the *Abhidhāna-ratna-mālā* and the *Kavi-rahasya.*[3]

[1] Ed. Benares, Saṁvat 1935; also Tejaschandra Vidyananda, Calcutta B.E. 1331 (=1924 A.D.). We have used MSS. Nos. 791, 4236, K 554 of the Dacca University Library.—MSS. also in Eggeling, *op. cit.* III. 519-20; Deccan College collection (now in the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute) No. 9 of A 1883-84.

[2] *E.g.*, Halāyudha quoted in the *Kalpa-taru* of Lakshmīdhara (Kane, *op. cit.* pp. 296, 301; *JASB.* 1915, p. 335); Halāyudha, son of Saṅkarshaṇa, and author of *Prakāśa* commentary on Kātyāyana's *Śrāddha-kalpasūtra* (Kane, p. 301); Halāyudha, author of *Purāṇa-sarvasva* (written in 1474 A.D.) and son of a Varendra Brahman Purushottama (Aufrecht, *Bod. Cat.* pp. 84-87, Nos. 143-44; Eggeling, *op. cit.* IV. 1410); the Mahākavi Halāyudha, author of *Dharma-viveka* (H. P. Śāstrī. *Notices.* I. 195-96); Halāyudha, author of *Dvija-nayana* (Mitra, *Notices,* II. 66-67, No. 633) which is an astronomical work on the determination of auspicious time for ceremonies; Halāyudha, author of a *Śrāddha-bhāshya* (*B.GS. Cat.* Fasc. iii. p. 130) or *Śrāddha-paddhati-ṭīkā* (*JASB.* 1915, p. 331); and Mahāmahopādhyāya Halāyudha, author of *Karmopadeśinī,* who was later than the 15th century (*Ibid.* p. 335). Mitra (*Notices,* II. 79, No. 652) assigns to our Halāyudha a miscellaneous Tāntric compilation called *Matsya-sūkta-tantra* in twelve Paṭalas on food, purification, Vrata etc.; but a fragment of the same work noticed by him in the same catalouge (No. 608), as well as in other catalogues (Auf.-*Cat.* I. 422; II. 97; III. 91), is anonymous (a MS. of the *Matsya-sūkta* in the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal has Halāyudha's name in the colophon).

[3] L. Heller, *Kavi-rahasya* (Diss.), Goettingen 1894, following R. G. Bhandarkar (*Report 1883-84,* pp. 8-9), shows that the lexicographer Halāyudha lived in the 10th century, writing first the *Abhidhāna-ratna-mālā,* then the grammatical poem *Kavi-rahasya* (A.D. 950), then the *Mṛita-sañjīvanī* on the *Piṅgala-chchhandaḥ-sūtra*

The contribution of Bengal to other technical Śāstras in this period is almost negligible. To philosophy it contributed nothing, although there was perhaps much scope in this direction for discrediting Buddhistic thought and ideas; but Bengal obviously preferred practical ritualistic regulation to abstract speculative thought. To the grammatical literature, again, its contribution is meagre and uncertain. The only grammarian who has been seriously claimed[1] is the Buddhist Purushottamadeva, author of the *Bhāshā-vṛitti* on Pāṇini, but his affiliation to Bengal is extremely problematic. The only direct evidence is the statement occurring in the *Artha-vivṛiti* commentary on the *Bhāshā-vṛitti* by Sṛishṭidhara, a late Bengal commentator of the 17th century,[2] who tells us that Purushottama wrote his work under the direction of Lakshmaṇasena, who wanted him to omit the Vedic rules.[3] That this statement is fanciful is rendered likely by the fact that in omitting the Vedic rules Purushottama, himself a Buddhist,[4] was following the usual tradition of Buddhist writers,[5] and there is no reason why Lakshmaṇasena,

under Muñja Vākpatirāja. See also Zachariae. *Die indischen Woerterbücher*, Strassburg 1897, p. 26 and Preface to Aufrecht's ed. of *Abhidhāna-ratna°*, London 1861, pp. iv-vi. Halāyudha's *Kavi-rahasya* was edited by Saurindra Mohan Tagore, Calcutta 1876; also by L. Heller, in two recensions, Greifwald 1900. His commentary on Piṅgala has been printed very often in India (Bibl. Ind. 1874; *NSP*. Bombay 1908); also in Roman transliteration, with translation, in Weber's *Indische Studien* (*Ueber die Metrik der Inder*), VIII (1863).

[1] S. C. Chakravarti in the the Preface to his ed. of the *Bhāshā-vṛitti, VRS.* 1918; D. C. Bhattacharya in *AJV.* III. Pt. I. pp. 203-04. Various other grammatical works are found under the name Purushottama or Purushottamadeva; and the tendency has been to ascribe them all to this well known grammarian. He is said to have written a Paribhāshā-vṛitti, called *Lalita-paribhāshī* (Mitra, *Notices.* VII. 166, No. 2402; MS. in the Varendra Research Society, Rajshahi), a *Uṇādi-vṛitti* quoted by Ujjvaladatta, a *Gaṇa-vṛitti* and a *Daśa-bala-kārikā.* Other works are: *Kāraka-chakra* (Mitra, *Notices,* VII. 116, No. 2345; the author also a Buddhist) on the use of cases; *Jñāpaka-samuchchaya* (Aufrecht, *Bodleian Cat.,* pp. 160-61, No. 353) which cites *Bhāshā-vṛitti*; and even a *Bhāshā-vṛitti* commentary on the grammatical *Bhaṭṭi-kāvya* (Mitra, VI. 216-17 No. 2155).

[2] So S. C. Chakravarti, *op. cit.* introd. p. 10; but D. C. Bhattacharya, *loc. cit.* assigns him to *c.* 1500 A.D. H. P. Śāstrī (Preface to *Descriptive Cat.* of *ASB.* MSS. IV.) speaks rightly of the unreliable character of Sṛishṭidhara's statement. The authority of this commentator is also questioned by D. C. Bhattacharya, *op. cit.* p. 198.

[3] *Vaidika-prayogānarthino Lakshmaṇasenasya rājña ājñayā.*

[4] As his invocation to the Buddha and references to the Bauddha Jina (iii. 3. 173), Bauddha-darśana and Bauddha-mata (ii. 1. 9, iv. 2. 114) and Sugata Tāyin (i. 4. 32) would indicate.

[5] *E.g.* Chandragomin whom he mentions in vii. 2. 69. He professes also to base his commentary on the *Bhāga-vṛitti,* which admittedly makes the unorthodox division of Vedic and Sanskrit rules. The exact date of Purushottamadeva of the

whose interest in Vedic ritualistic writings cannot be doubted,[1] should make this extraordinary request when such an omission is clearly disapproved by orthodox Hindu tradition.[2] The facts that the grammar had circulation in North Bengal and Mithilā[3] and that Purushottama refers (ii, 4. 7) to Varendrī are not conclusive.[4] If Sarvānanda quotes from the *Bhāshā-vṛitti*[5] as early as 1159 A.D., the position becomes still more uncertain. The identity, again, of the grammarian Purushottama with the lexicographer of that name is plausible but unproved; and the latter's belonging to Bengal cannot be confidently asserted.[6] The only grounds of identity are that both bore the same, but not an uncommon, name, and that both were

Bhāshā-vṛitti is not known. As he refers to a difference of opinion between Śrutapāla and Kayyaṭa (*c.* 10th century A.D.) and as he quotes (ii. 4. 23) anonymously from the *Kīchaka-vadha* of Nītivarman (ed. S. K. De, Dacca 1929, ii. 25d), which work cannot be placed later than the middle of the 11th century, we can provisionally take the 10th century as the upper limit of his date; the lower limit is given by the reference of Sarvānanda in 1159 A.D., which is discussed below.

[1] Lakshmaṇasena's copper-plates refer to his gifts to Brāhmaṇas, proficient in Vedic lore, and to his performance of orthodox ritualistic ceremonies.

[2] This tradition is mentioned by S. C. Chakravarti, *op. cit.* introd. p. 7; D. C. Bhattacharya, *op. cit.* p. 198.

[3] H. P. Śāstrī, *Nepal Cat.* I. p. vi. More relevant, but not conclusive, is the one instance (S. C. Chakravarti, introd. p. 8) of Purushottama's reference to the Bengali pronunciation of *b* and *v*. The other argument that he quotes the apologetic phrase of Bengal scribes *lekhako nāsti-doshakaḥ* (ii. 2. 24) proves nothing. All these arguments do not exclude the other traditions of his belonging to Mithilā and Orissa.

[4] The Govardhana cited by Purushottama in the illustration *upagovardhanaṁ śābdikāḥ* (i. 4. 87) is certainly not the poet Āchārya Govardhana mentioned by Jayadeva, but a Śābdika who is cited by Ujjvaladatta, Sarvānanda and Rāyamukuṭa as the author of a *Uṇādi-vṛitti*. There is no ground for thinking that this Govardhana, as well as Keśava cited by Purushottama, belonged to Bengal.

[5] The two references to Purushottamadeva are doubtful. On Amara ii. 6. 22, Sarvānanda says: *purushottamadevena gurviṇītyasya durgaṭe'sādhutvam uktam*, but no *gurviṇī* form is discussed by Purushottama (see iv. 1. 44). Nor does it refer to Śaraṇa's *Durghaṭa-vṛitti*. Apparently it is a reference to another Purushottama who was the author of a Durghaṭa. Sarvānanda's other reference (on Amara ii. 7. 23) is to a Uṇādi commentary. The remaining citations appear to be from the lexicographer Purushottama. The *Purushottama-ṭīkā* (on Amara ii. 8. 91) however may be a reference to the *Bhāshā-vṛitti*, but *Bh.-vṛitti* iii. 1. 135 does not discuss the form in question. The explicit mention of *Bhāshā-vṛitti* itself in ii. 8. 16 is the only undoubted reference to *Bh.-vṛitti* v. i. 124, where the formation of *dautya* referred to is discussed. It is clear, therefore, that Sarvānanda refers to more than one Purushottama. Śaraṇadeva's quotations from Purushottamadeva cannot be located in the *Bhāshā-vṛitti*.

[6] As in *IC.* II. 262.

Buddhists; but there is also a tradition[1] that the lexicographer belonged to Kaliṅga. All the four lexical works of the author are quoted by Sarvānanda and must, therefore, be earlier than 1159 A. D. The *Trikāṇḍa-śesha* of Purushottama[2] is, as its name implies,[3] a supplement in three parts (1050 verses) to the *Amara-kośa*, the professed object being to supply those words which Amara left out.[4] The *Hārāvali*,[5] a smaller work of 278 verses, is in two parts, which deal respectively with synonymous and homonymous words not in common use. The *Varṇa-deśanā*,[6] in prose, treats of orthographical variations, giving a collection of differently spelt words, and mentions such cases of confusion as between *ksh* and *kh*, which, he says, is due to the similarity of the characters employed, among others, by the Gauḍas (*gauḍādi-lipi-sādhāraṇāt*). The *Dvirūpa-kośa*[7] is a brief work of seventy-five verses, dealing with words which are spelt in two different ways.[8] These are useful compilations but in no way very remarkable works.[9]

Kshīrasvāmin in the latter half of the 11th century quotes and criticises as erroneous a Gauḍa author more than fifteen times in his commentary on the *Amara-kośa*, and also gives more than five further references where the word Gauḍa in the citation is used in the plural, apparently meaning a school rather than an individual. But unfortunately we know nothing of any early lexical writers of

[1] Introd. to ed. of *Trikāṇḍa*°, mentioned below.

[2] *VP*. 1915. The author calls himself Purushottama (also in *Hārāvali*), and not Purushottama-deva as in *Bhāshā-vṛitti*.

[3] The *Amara-kośa* being in three Kāṇḍas. It has nothing to do with the lexicon *Trikāṇḍa* of Bhāguri mentioned in *Bhāshā-vṛitti* iv. 4. 113.

[4] It gives, for instance, 37 more names of the Buddha than Amara's 17, and mentions the Śrāvaka, the Pratyekabuddhas, and the Buddhist work *Prajñāpāramitā*.

[5] Ed. in *Abhidhāna-saṁgraha* I, Bombay 1889.

[6] MS. in Eggeling, *op. cit.* II. 295, No. 1039/1475a.

[7] Ed. in *Abhidhāna-saṁgraha* I, Bombay 1889. MSS. in Eggeling, *op. cit.* II. 294, No. 1037; Aufrecht, *Bod. Cat.*, No. 449-50 (anon.).

[8] Other works ascribed are: the *Ekākshara-kośa*, which is a homonymous vocabulary of syllabic signs or monosyllables used as words (MSS. in Eggeling, *op. cit.* II. 296, No. 1042/1475a; Aufrecht, *Bod. Cat.* p. 189, Nos. 431-32); but the Bodleian MS. calls the author Purushottama-deva-*śarman*; *Ushma-bheda* (Mitra, *Notices*, VI. 231, No. 2170), which consists of three separate vocabularies on the three sibilants; *Jakāra-bheda* (Mitra, II. 311, No. 915), a vocabulary of words having *j*, as distinguished from *y* (also includes the three sibilants and the nasals *n* and *ṇ*); *Śabda-bheda-prakāśa*, on words differently spelt (Mitra, VI. 298, No. 2235; but see I. 118, No. 223, where the work is assigned to Śiva); it is different from the *Dvirūpa-kośa*.

[9] On these works see, Th. Zachariae, *Ind. Woerterbücher*, pp. 23 f, 38 f; Ramavatara Sarma, Introd. to *Kalpadru-kośa* (*GOS*. 1928), pp. xxi-xxiv.

Gauḍa to whom he might be referring. The only early lexicographer, whose Bengal origin admits of little doubt, comes after Kshīrasvāmin. This is Vandyaghaṭīya Sarvānanda, son of Ārtihara,[1] and author of a commentary, entitled *Ṭīkā-sarvasva,*[2] on Amara's lexicon. The Vandyaghaṭī is well known as the name of a place in Rāḍhā from which Vandya or Vandyaghaṭīya Brahmans take their name;[3] but it is curious that Sarvānanda's name is missing in the list of Bengal genealogical writers, and that manuscripts of his commentary have not as yet been found in Bengal,[4] but have been discovered in Southern India. Sarvânanda himself gives a clue to his date[5] when he says (on Amara i. 4. 21) that the Śaka year 1081 and the Kali year 4260 had just passed at the moment he was writing; a statement which gives us the date 1159-60 A. D. He was aquainted with a commentary called *Daśa-ṭīkā* (*daśa-ṭīkā-vid*);[6] and in his painstaking work not only earlier commentaries but nearly two hundred works and authors are cited. It is in no way inferior to the commentary of Kshīrasvāmin, and is interesting for the number of Deśī (mostly Bengali)[7] words cited in it. That the work was not forgotten is shown by its citation by Bṛihaspati Rāyamukuṭa, the next important Bengal commentator on the *Amara-kośa,* who wrote his *Padachandrikā* in 1431 A.D.

If Bengal's contribution to the technical Śāstras, with the exception perhaps of ritualistic writings, had been poor and almost insignificant, it was more than made up by the respectable body of poetical literature it produced in this period, which excelled that of any other period in its history, and which contributed at least one remarkable poem of enduring fame and quality. The available references, though scanty, sufficiently indicate the literary taste and liberality of the later Sena kings, Vallālasena, Lakshmaṇasena and

[1] We need not take the explanation of Haraprasād Śāstrī (Note to Sesagiri Śāstrī's *Report,* II) that Ārtihara denotes a person who has married a girl of superior status, and there is no reason to doubt that it was the actual name of his father (see S. K. De, *JRAS.* 1927, p. 472, note 3). Cf. *infra,* Ch. XV.

[2] Ed. *TSS.* in four parts, 1914-17.

[3] Raghunandana similarly calls himself Vandyaghaṭīya Hariharātmaja.

[4] An Oḍiyā MS. of the work is noticed by H. P. Śāstrī in *Notices,* 2nd Series, IV. No. 101, pp. 76-77.

[5] See the question discussed in *JRAS.* 1928, pp. 135-36, 900 f.

[6] The phrase *daśa-ṭīkā* does not probably mean ten commentaries, but gives the name of a commentary on Amara, which is cited by this name by Liṅgabhaṭṭa, another commentator on Amara (see S. C. Vidyabhusan's ed. of Subhūtichandra's *Kāmadhenu-ṭīkā* on Amara, Bibl. Ind., Calcutta 1912, p. ix).

[7] For a discussion of these words, see the two articles respectively of Jogesh Chandra Ray and Basanta Ranjan Ray in *VSP.* (B.S. 1336=1929 A.D.), Pt. 2. The number of words is over 300.

Keśavasena. They were not only generous patrons of learning and themselves men of learning, but they were also poets and friends of poets. We have a poetical anthology, entitled *Sadukti-karṇāmṛita*[1] and compiled in Bengal towards the end of the period, on the 20th Phālguna, Śaka 1127 (=11th February, 1206 A. D.),[2] which furnishes important material for the study of the poetical literature. Its compiler Śrīdharadāsa was the son of Vaṭudāsa, who is described as the chief feudatory (Mahāsāmanta-chūḍāmaṇi)[3] and close friend of Lakshmaṇasena. The work, bearing ample testimony to compiler's taste and industry by its fine and varied collection, in five parts, of 2370 verses of 485 authors,[4] gives us some excellent detached stanzas of poets, who are otherwise unknown and some of whom probably belonged to Bengal.[5] It is difficult, however, to single out, from mere names of the authors or subject-matter of the verses, the poets who actually belonged to Bengal, but there are some who are known to us from other sources.[6] Among these may be

[1] The work is also called *Sūkti-karṇāmṛita* in some MSS. Only two fasc. of the work containing 184 pages, ed. Ramavatara Sarma, was published in Bibl. Ind. (till 1921); but the complete work was edited by the same, and printed with introd. and additional readings by Haradatta Sarma, Lahore 1933. The edition professes to utilise but gives no account of two MSS. including the one (imperfectly collated) existing in the Serampore College Library; but since two very important MSS. of the work, *viz.*, those in the *ASB.* and Calcutta Sanskrit College Library do not appear to have been utilised, its value is considerably impaired; and the method of editing is hardly critical. The work itself was noticed by Aufrecht in *ZDMG.* XXXVI. 361 f, 509 f; by Pischel in his *Hofdichter des Lakṣmaṇasena,* Goettingen 1893; and by Monomohan Chakravarti in *JASB.* 1906, pp. 174-176.

[2] Cf. *supra* p. 232.

[3] Whose high praise is recorded in five verses (v. 76. 1-5) respectively of five contemporary poets, Mathu, Sāñchādhara, Vetāla, Umāpatidhara and Kavirāja-Vyāsa. The colophon speaks of Śrīdharadāsa as Mahāmāṇḍalika.

[4] The five parts, called Pravāhas, are entitled respectively Deva, Śṛiṅgāra, Chāṭu, Apadeśa and Uchchāvacha, and contain 95, 179, 54, 72 and 76 sections (called Vīchis). As each Vīchi is arranged to contain symmetrically five verses, the total number of verses should have been 2380, but as several verses appear to be lost, the actual number in the printed text is 2370.

[5] The compiler of the anthology, however, did not confine himself to Bengal nor even to his own time, but selected his materials widely from old and new, known and unknown sources. His Vaishṇavite leanings made him give a large number of verses on Kṛishṇa, some of which have been freely utilised by Rūpa Gosvāmin in his *Padyāvalī.*

[6] As the Sanskrit anthologies will be cited several times hereafter, the following abbreviations will be employed: *Skm.*=*Sadukti-karṇāmṛita,* ed. Ramavatara Sarma Lahore 1933; *Śp.*=*Śārṅgadhara-paddhati,* ed. P. Peterson, Bombay 1888; *Sbhv.*=*Subhāshitāvalī* of Vallabha-deva, ed. P. Peterson, Bombay 1886; *Pdv.*=*Padyāvalī,* ed. S. K. De, Dacca 1934; *Sml.*=*Sūktimuktāvalī* of Jahlaṇa, ed. Ember Krishnamacharya, *GOS.* 1938; *Kvs.*=*Kavīndra-vachana-samuchchaya,* ed. F. W. Thomas, Bibl. Ind. 1912.

mentioned the royal poets, Vallālasena (one verse),[1] Lakshmaṇasena (11 verses)[2] and Keśavasena (six verses),[3] as well as Dhoyī, Umāpatidhara, Govardhana, Śaraṇa and Jayadeva.

There is in this anthology a self-laudatory verse of Dhoyī (v. 29. 2)[4] which extols, not undeservedly, Lakshmaṇasena as the Vikramāditya of Bengal. A traditional verse[5] speaks of five, if not nine, gems of his court, and they are enumerated as Govardhana, Śaraṇa, Jayadeva, Umāpati and Kavirāja.[6] Of this Kavirāja, which is obviously a title[7] borne by many a poet, we know nothing. He cannot be identified with the well known Kavirāja, author of the *Rāghava-pāṇḍavīya*, whose patron was Kāmadeva of the Kadamba dynasty (i. 13).[8] It has been suggested with greater probability that the Kavirāja refers to Dhoyī,[9] who is described by Jayadeva as Kavi-kshmāpati[10] and who styles himself similarly in his own *Pavana-dūta*[11] (verses 101, 103). Jayadeva describes him also as Śrutidhara, an epithet over the interpretation of which as an intended compliment there has been much diversity of opinion.[12] The *Pavana-*

[1] *Skm.* IV. 6. 3=*Śp* No. 763.

[2] A verse of Lakshmaṇasena is given also in *Śp.* No. 923.

[3] A Mādhava is quoted six times in the printed text, but no Mādhavasena, as Aufrecht, *ZDMG.* XXXVI. 540-41 found in his MS. M. Chakravarti, *op. cit.* p. 172 gives only one verse (*Skm.* IV. 48, 3) as quoted from Mādhavasena on the authority of his three MSS. (Mādhava in the printed text). From Halāyudha three verses are quoted in *Skm.*; but as one of these (I. 63. 4) occurs in the much earlier anthology *Kvs.* No. 48 (Mālāyudhasya), it is doubtful if the contemporary Halāyudha is meant.

[4] The first half of this verse agrees with the first half of *Pavana-dūta* 101, but the last half is given differently. Śrīdhara certainly knew this poem for he quotes verse 104=*Skm.* v. 61. 5.

[5] It runs thus (*Sbhv.*, introd. p. 38; Pischel, *op. cit.* p. 5) : *Govardhanaś cha Śaraṇo Jayadeva Umāpatiḥ/ Kavirājaś cha ratnāni samitau Lakshmaṇasya cha//*, a most pedestrian couplet, which however probably preserves an old tradition.

[6] This is confirmed by Kumbha (14th century) in his comment on Jayadeva I. 4, but Kumbha mentiones six, adding Dhoyī and substituting Śrutidhara for Kavirāja.

[7] A much coveted title if we are to believe Rājaśekhara.

[8] This poet, whose real name was perhaps Mādhava Bhaṭṭa, would be almost contemporaneous. See Pischel, *op. cit.* p. 37.

[9] The name is given also as Dhoī, Dhoyīka or Dhuyī.

[10] Which is equivalent to Kavirāja as explained by all scholiast (see Pischel, *op. cit.* pp. 33-34).

[11] *Kavi-kshmābhṛitāṁ chakravartī.* The colophon describes him as *Dhoyī-kavirāja.* Cf. *Skm.* v. 29. 2.

[12] *Viśrutaḥ śrutidharo Dhoyī kavi-kshmā-patiḥ.* Kumbha in his commentary on the *Gīta-govinda* is inclined to find a reference to a scholar named Śrutidhara; but most other scholiasts agree that it is an epithet of Dhoyī. They explain the word as "one who can remember what he hears once." *i.e.* a person of strong memory, which may imply that Jayadeva means by this phrase to convey Dhoyī's power

dūta,[1] as its name implies, is one of the earliest Dūta-kāvyas written in imitation of Kālidāsa's famous poem, and consists of 104 stanzas in the Mandākrāntā metre. The poem is remarkable for its taking up, without its being a Charita, an historical personage for its hero, and furnishes interesting historical and geographical information. With the object of eulogising his patron the poet makes Kuvalayavatī, a Gandharva maiden of the Malaya hills, fall in love with Lakshmaṇasena, king of Gauḍa, during the latter's alleged career of conquest in the South; and the elegant, if somewhat conventional, poem describes with considerable poetic talent the route to be followed by the north-easterly spring wind in carrying the message of the love-sick heroine to the royal hero. Dhoyī refers to several other unnamed works composed by himself. This is rendered likely by the fact that more than twenty verses, not traceable in the poem, are ascribed to him in the anthologies.[2]

To the other court-poets of Lakshmaṇasena also we have a reference by Jayadeva in the opening verse (i. 4) of his *Gīta-govinda* mentioned above. We are told that Umāpatidhara could make the words sprout (*vāchaḥ pallavayati*).[3] The *Sadukti-karṇāmṛita,* which quotes about ninety verses of Umāpatidhara, as well as of

of memory and imitativeness, and consequent want of originality as evinced by his *Pavana-dūta.* But Pischel rightly observes, as against Lassen (ed. *Gīta-govinda,* Bonn 1836, p. 73) that this and other phrases of Jayadeva in this verse are not meant as a disparagement of his estimable contemporaries, but to indicate their particular literary quality. The variant reading is Śrutadhara. Might not the phrase mean "well versed in the Veda"? (See Wilson, *Sansk.-Eng. Dict.,* Calcutta 1832, *s. v.*). A poet Śrutadhara, however, is quoted in *Śp.* Nos. 1144, 3910, in *Sbhv.* Nos. 625, 931, 1680, and *Sml.,* 32. 10, p. 105; but these verses do not occur in the *Pavana-dūta.*

[1] The poem was first brought to notice by H. P. Śāstrī (in *Notices,* 2nd Series, I. Pt. 2, pp. 221-22, No. 225), who gave an abstract of its contents in *Proc. ASB.* July 1898. It was edited from a single MS. by Manomohan Chakravarti in *JASB.* 1905, pp. 53-71; re-edited by Chintaharan Chakravarti in *SPS.,* No. 13, Calcutta 1926.

[2] Besides 20 in *Skm.,* we have two in *Sml.* (mentioned as Goyidhoyī-kavirāja); but one of these verses (p. 246; *nija-nayana-pratibimbair=Sāhitya-darpaṇa* ad VIII. 15, anon.) is assigned to Dharaṇīdhara in *Kvs.* 153 and *Skm.* (II. 70. 2.), and one in *Śp.* No. 1161 (=*Skm.* IV. 2. 2, *Umāpatidharasya*).

[3] The interpretation of the phrase has been fully discussed by Pischel, *op. cit.* pp. 14-17. It has been variously taken to imply verbosity, love of recondite words, floridity, bombast, superficiality, as well as mastery of lexicography. In this connexion Pischel examines the Deopārā inscription composed by Umāpatidhara and concludes that the poet's mastery over verbal expression is manifest even in this short composition of 36 verses. On this poet see also Aufrecht, *ZDMG.* XL. 142 f.

one Umāpati (i. 11. 3; iii. 17. 4; v. 29. 1, 61. 3, 3, 73. 3),[1] mentions under the latter name (v. 29. 1) a poem, *Chandra-chūḍa-charita*, composed under a prince named Chāṇakyachandra, who is otherwise unknown but who is conjectured by Pischel to have been a vassal of Lakshmaṇasena. Some of these anthology verses are remarkable, but they are of unequal merit. The name of Umāpatidhara occurs also as that of the author of the Praśasti in the Deopārā inscription[2] of Vijayasena, father of Vallālasena. Beginning with an invocation to Śiva, it commemorates the erection by the king of the temple of Pradyumneśvara, who is described as a combination of Śiva and Vishṇu, and records the genealogy and career of the king in thirty-six verses composed in a variety of classical metres. Four of these verses (Nos. 7, 23, 24, 30) occur in the *Sadukti°* (III. 49, 4; III. 17. 5; III. 5. 5; III. 17. 4) with Umāpatidhara's name; while one verse ascribed to Umāpatidhara in the anthology (I. 72. 4) is found in the Mādhāinagar copper-plate[3] of Lakshmaṇasena (v. 2), the authorship of which, on this ground, has sometimes been credited to him. The Deopārā inscription informs us that Umāpatidhara lived during the reign of Vijayasena of the Sena dynasty (*senānvaya*) and refers to the author's "understanding purified by the study of words and their meanings". If any reliance can be placed on the tradition recorded by Merutuṅga in his *Prabandha-chintāmaṇi*[4] that Umāpatidhara was a minister of Lakshmaṇasena, then he lived in the successive reigns of Vijayasena, his son and his grandson.[5]

[1] The two names often occur side by side under verses consecutively quoted in *Skm.*; this would probably imply that a distinction was meant. The four verses of Umāpatidhara in *Pdv.* (Nos. 148, 259, 371, 372) occur under the same name in *Skm.* *Śp.* gives two verses (Nos. 755, 3490), but the first of these occurs in *Skm.* (IV. 5. 4) with the name Rāmadāsa. *Śp.* No. 1161 ascribed to Dhoyī is credited, probably more correctly, to Umāpatidhara in *Skm.* (IV. 2. 2). *Sml.* has fifteen verses, of which one (*tenākhāni*, p. 375) is assigned to Umāpatidhara (v. 13. 2) and four others (pp. 121, 89, 346, 150) are ascribed respectively to Śaila-sarvajña (IV. 2. 3), Āchārya Gopīkā (IV. 39. 2), Dhanañjaya (iii. 43. 3) and Dhoyīka (II. 137. 3) in *Skm.* Three verses of Umāpatidhara in *Skm.* (iii. 20. 4: III. 26. 4; v. 18. 3) refer to Prāgjyotisha, Kāśi-janapada and Mlechha-narendra in connexion with an unknown king. Cf. *supra*, p. 219, f.n. 3.

[2] *EI.* I. 305-15; re-edited, *IB.* 43.

[3] *IB.* 109.

[4] Ed. Ramchandra Dinanath, Bombay 1888, p. 289; see Tawney's translation, Bibl. Ind., Calcutta 1901, pp. 181 f.

[5] An anonymous commentary on the *Gīta-govinda* (cited by Lassen *op. cit.* p. 72 and Pischel, *op. cit.* p. 17) not only makes Umāpatidhara a member (Sāmājika) of Lakshmaṇasena's court but also a Vaidya by caste! Our author is certainly to be distinguished from the much later Umāpati Upādhyāya, author of *Pārijāta-haraṇa-nāṭaka* (ed. Grierson in *JBORS.* III. 20-98), who flourished under Hindupati Harihara Deva (of Mithilā) reigning "after the Yavana rule"; this Maithila poet appears to be familiar with Jayadeva's poem.

The high tribute paid by Jayadeva to Āchārya Govardhana that he had no rival in the composition of faultless erotic verse[1] enables us to identify him with Govardhanāchārya, author of *Āryā-saptaśatī*,[2] a punning verse (No. 39) of which refers to an illustrious king of the Sena dynasty (*sena-kula-tilaka-bhūpati*). In verse 38 the poet speaks of his learned father Nīlāmbara who appears to have composed a work on Dharma-śāstra, while in one of the concluding verses he mentions his brothers and pupils, Udayana[3] and Balabhadra,[4] who helped him in revising and publishing his poem. The honorific Āchārya, mentioned by Jayadeva as well as by the poem itself (verses 51, 702), perhaps indicates his high rank as a scholar and poet. The poem, as its name indicates, is a collection of a little over 700 detached verses[5] in the Āryā metre, alphabetically arranged in sections, most of which have a predominantly erotic theme. In following the tradition of the love-poem in the stanza-form, in which the aim is to depict, within the restricted scope of a self-standing and daintily finished verse, some definite erotic situation or a definite phase of the emotion, Govardhana has obviously taken (verse 52) the Prakrit *Sattasaī* of Hāla as his model;[6] but he was at the same time attempting to achieve a task of no small difficulty. Such miniature painting involves the perfect expression of a pregnant idea or intense emotion by means of a few precise and elegant touches. In this Govardhana has, no doubt, attained a measure of success, but very often his verses, moving haltingly in the somewhat unsuitable medium of the Āryā metre, are more clever than poetical, and lack the inimitable flavour, wit and heartiness of Hāla's miniature word-pictures. It achieved, however, the distinction of having inspired

[1] As against Jayadeva's reference to the *śṛiṅgārottara-sat-prameya-rachana* of Āchārya Govardhana, we have verse 47 of the *Āryā-saptaśatī*, where Govardhana praises compositions which are *sotkarsha-śṛiṅgāra*.

[2] Ed. Kāvyamālā 1, Bombay 1886 (reprinted 1895), with *Vyaṅgyārtha-dīpana* commentary of Ananta-paṇḍita; also ed. Somanath Sarma, Dacca Saṁvat 1921 (text only, in Bengali characters). Aufrecht mentions four other commentaries. Our references are to the Bombay ed.

[3] M. Chakravarti believes (*JASB.* 1906, p. 159) that this Udayana may be identical with the Udayana-kavi who composed the Praśasti of the Megheśvara temple at Bhuvaneśvara in Orissa (*EI.* VI. 202).

[4] Under the name Balabhadra, *Skm.* quotes four verses (II. 15. 1; II. 28. 1; IV. 19. 5; IV. 50. 3).

[5] The Dacca edition gives a total of 731 consecutively numbered verses; but the Bombay edition and M. Chakravarti *loc. cit.* agree that there are 54 introductory stanzas, 696 stanzas in the main body of the text and 6 concluding stanzas, giving a total of 756 verses.

[6] The imitation of the Prakrit model is carried to the extent not only of using the moric Āryā metre, but also of calling the sections Vrajyās. It is interesting that the last Vrajyā is called *Ksha-kārā* Vrajyā!

the Hindi *Satsaī* of Vihārīlāl which holds a high rank in Hindi poetry.[1]

Jayadeva also refers to another poetical contemporary, named Śaraṇa, who, in his opinion, was praiseworthy in quick and difficult composition.[2] On this testimony of reconditeness, an attempt has been made to identify him with the grammarian Śaraṇadeva, author of the *Durghaṭa-vṛitti*,[3] a work in which difficult usages of doubtful grammatical accuracy, culled from classical authors, are justified with nicety. There is no chronological difficulty, as the *Durghaṭa-vṛitti* is expressly dated in Śaka 1095 (=1173 A. D.) ; and the fact that its author, according to the Namaskriyā verses, was probably a Buddhist, need not seriously affect the question. But there is no evidence to justify the identification, which is only a conjecture. A verse of Śaraṇadeva quoted in the *Sadukti*° (III. 54. 5) tells us that he flourished under some illustrious king of the Sena dynasty (*sena-vaṁśa-tilaka*) ; and another verse (III. 15. 4) of his, deprecating the neighbouring kings of Kaliṅga, Chedi, Kāmarūpa and the Mlechchhas, makes a reference to Gauḍa-Lakshmī. But the anthology quotes not only Śaraṇadeva four times (I. 69. 5 ; II. 135. 2 and the two references given above), but also Śaraṇa (extensively, fifteen times), Śaraṇadatta (III. 2. 5) and Chirantana-śaraṇa (IV. 1. 2). There is nothing very recondite in the verses quoted, and it is difficult to say if all the authors are identical.[4]

But the greatest among these poets is undoubtedly Jayadeva himself. The fame of his *Gīta-govinda*[5] has never been confined

[1] It is noteworthy that none of the stanzas of *Āryā-saptaśatī* is quoted in *Skm.* A poet Govardhana is quoted six times, but these verses cannot be traced in the poem. The *Śp.* (No. 466) and *Sml.* (p. 304) quote one verse each of Govardhanāchārya in Āryā, both of which are found in the poem; but another verse credited to Govardhana in *Śp.* (No. 3400) is not traceable in either edition. Three verses of Govardhanāchārya quoted in *Pdv.* occur in the poem, but the fourth verse (No. 374) similarly cited is untraceable and is given anonymously in *Skm.* (I. 58. 4).

[2] *Śaraṇaḥ ślāghyo durūha-drute* (v. l. °*druteḥ*, °*adbute*). For interpretation see Pischel, *op. cit.* pp. 24-29. S. C. Chakravarti (introd. to *Bhāshā-vṛitti*, p. 7) explains: "Śaraṇa is praiseworthy in dealing with (liquefying) the stiff"!

[3] *TSS.* No. 6, 1909.

[4] The two verses assigned to Śaraṇa in *Pdv.* (Nos. 369, 370) occur under the same name in *Skm.* (I. 61. 2, 5). Only these two Bengal anthologies quote Śaraṇa.

[5] Very often printed in India. The earliest edition is by Lassen, Bonn 1836. Other editions: With the *Rasika-priyā* of Kumbha and the *Rasa-mañjarī* of Śaṅkara-miśra, *NSP.* Bombay 1917, 1923; with the *Bālabodhinī* of Chaitanyadāsa (first printed, Calcutta 1881), ed. Harekrishna Mukherji (in Bengali characters), Calcutta 1929. For an account of the commentaries, see Lassen, Prolegomena to the work cited and Pischel, *op. cit.* The work has been translated

within the limits of Bengal. It has claimed more than forty commentators from different provinces and more than a dozen imitations;[1] it has been cited extensively in the anthologies;[2] and it has been regarded not only as a great poem but also as a great religious work of mediaeval Vaishṇavism. It is no wonder, therefore, that the work should be claimed also by Mithilā and Orissa.[3] Of the author himself, however, our information is scanty, although we have a large number of legends,[4] which are matters of pious belief rather than positive historical facts. In a verse occurring in the work itself (XII. 11), which however is not commented upon by Kumbha[5] in the middle of the 15th century, we are informed that he was the son of Bhojadeva and Rāmādevī (variants Rādhā°, Vāmā°). The name of his wife was probably Padmāvatī,[6] and his home was Kendubilva (III. 10),[7] which has been identified with

into English by Sir William Jones (*Collected Works*, London 1807) and Edwin Arnold (*The Indian Song of Songs*, London 1875, free verse-rendering); into German by F. Rückert in *ZKM*. I (1837), pp. 129-173 (Berlin: Karl Schnabel 1920) and into French by G. Courtillier, Paris 1904.

[1] Some of which take for their theme Rāma-Sītā and Hara-Gaurī.

[2] Besides 31 verses quoted in *Skm.*, of which only two (I. 59. 4; II. 37. 4) are traceable in the poem, we have 24 quotations in the *Śp.* and 4 in *Sbhv.* The *Sml.* assigns nine verses to Jayadeva, six of which occur in the *Prasanna-rāghava* of his namesake, Jayadeva, who describes himself as the son of Sumitrā and Mahādeva of the Kauṇḍinya-gotra, but with whom he is often confounded. One of the *Sml.* verses (p. 314) of Jayadeva occurs in the *Mahānāṭaka* (iv. 22)!

[3] The question is discussed by M. Chakravarti in *JASB*. 1906, pp. 163-65.

[4] The Hindi *Bhakta-māl* of Nābhādāsa (edited and rewritten by Nārāyaṇadāsa in the middle of the 17th century), as well as the Sanskrit *Bhakta-mālā* by Chandradatta based on it, records some of these legends. See Pischel, *op. cit.* pp. 19, 23, and Gierson, *Vernacular Lit. of India* (Calcutta 1889), Sec. 51. These legends, however, show in what light Jayadeva was glorified in the eyes of the later Vaishṇava devotee.

[5] But it is accepted by other commentators and is found in Bühler's Kashmir MS. (*Kashmir Report*, p. 64), as well as in the Nepal MS. dated 1494 (*JASB*. 1906, p. 166).

[6] The implied personal reference to Padmāvatī in i. 2 is disputed expressly by Kumbha, who would interpret the word *padmāvatī* as the goddess Lakshmī. In x. 8 we have: *padmāvatī-ramaṇa-jayadeva-kavi°*, but there is a variant reading: *jayati jayadeva-kavi°*, which omits this word; while the third reference in XI. 8 is interpreted by Kumbha also in the same way. But Chaitanyadāsa, Śaṅkaramiśra and other commentators take these passages as implying a reference to the proper name of Jayadeva's wife. The legend that Padmāvatī was a dancing girl, and Jayadeva supplied the musical accompaniment to her dancing, is said to be implied by means of punning in Jayadeva's self-description as *padmāvatī-charaṇa-chāraṇa-chakravartin* in I. 2.

[7] The name is given variously as Kindu°, Tindu°, or Sindhu°. Kumbha takes it as the name of the village where the poet resided or as his Śāsana; Chaitanyadāsa believes it to be the name of his Grāma and family (Kula); Śaṅkara thinks it to be the Vṛitti-grāma of Jayadeva's family.

Kenduli on the bank of the river Ajaya in the district of Birbhum, where an annual fair is still held in his memory on the last day of Māgha. The various songs in the poem indicate that the poet had also a knowledge of music. Jayadeva himself does not give any independent clue to his date; but the traditional accounts[1] agree in placing him in the court of king Lakshmaṇasena; and apart from the poet's own references to Dhoyī and Āchārya Govardhana, which point to the period of Sena rule, a verse from the *Gīta-govinda* (I. 16) is said to occur in an inscription dated 1292 A.D.,[2] while two verses (I. 59. 4 and II. 37. 4) given by *Sadukti°* as Jayadeva's are found in the poem (XI. 11 and VI. 11).

The *Gīta-govinda*, with its erotic emotionalism, has been claimed by the Chaitanya sect as one of its sources of religious inspiration; and Bengal Vaishṇavism would regard the work not so much as a poetical composition of great beauty as an authoritative religious text, illustrating the refined subtleties of its theology and Rasa-śāstra. The theme as well as inspiration of Jayadeva's poem, like those of the Maithili Rādhā-Kṛishṇa songs of Vidyāpati,[3] would doubtless lend themselves to such interpretation, but the attitude has somewhat seriously affected the proper appreciation of Jayadeva's work. It should not be forgotten that Jayadeva flourished at least three centuries before the promulgation of the Rasa-śāstra of Rūpa Gosvāmin; and the Kṛishṇaism, which emerges in a finished literary form in his poem, as in the Maithili songs of Vidyāpati, should not be equalised with that presented by the dogmas and doctrines of later scholastic theologians.[4] As a poet of undoubted gifts, it

[1] For references see Pischel, *op. cit.* pp. 5-6.

[2] See *JASB.* 1906, pp. 168-69. This is the stone-inscription (facsimile published by M. R. Majumdar, *Journ. University of Bombay*, VI. part 6,125), dated Saṁvat 1348 (=1292 A.D.), of the time of Śārṅgadeva Vaghelā of Gujarat, which reproduces the Daśāvatāra-stuti verse (*Gīta-govinda* I. 16: *vedān uddharate*) as a benedictory stanza. Two poems, ascribed to Jayadeva, in praise of Hari-Govinda, are preserved in the Sikh *Ādi-Granth*, but in their present form they are in Western Apabhraṁśa.

[3] As his works testify, Vidyāpati, also a court-poet, was undoubtedly a Smārta Pañchopāsaka, but the followers of Chaitanya have attempted to transform him also into a Vaishṇava devotee. The question has been discussed by H. P. Śāstrī in his edition of Vidyāpati's *Kīrti-latā*.

[4] For a discussion of this question, as well as on the sources of Jayadeva's poem, cf. S. K. De, *Pre-Caitanya Vaiṣṇavism in Bengal* (*Festschrift M. Winternitz*, pp. 196 f) and in *Early History of the Vaiṣṇava Faith and Movement in Bengal*, pp. 7-10. There are parallelisms between the treatment by Jayadeva, on the one hand, and the *Brahma-vaivarta-purāṇa* on the other, of the Rādhā-Kṛishṇa legend and its erotico-religious possibilities in a vivid background of sensuous charm; but there is no conclusive proof of Jayadeva's indebtedness to the Purāṇa. Nor is it probable that the source of Jayadeva's inspiration was the Kṛishṇa-Gopī legend of

could not have been his concern to compose a religious treatise according to any particular Vaishṇava dogmatics;[1] he claims merit as a poet, and his religious inspiration should not be allowed to obscure this proper claim. If he selected the love-story of Rādhā and Kṛishṇa, fascinating to mediaeval India, the divine love that he depicts is considerably humanised in an atmosphere of passionate poetic appeal.

There cannot be any doubt that the *Gīta-govinda*, both in its emotional and literary aspects, occupies a distinctive place in the history of Sanskrit poetry. Jayadeva emphasises the praise and worship of Kṛishṇa and claims religious merit, but he prides himself upon the elegance, clarity and music of his diction, as well as upon the felicity and richness of his sentiments. The claims are in no way extravagant. Even if there is nothing new in it, the theme must have been a living reality to the poet as well as to his audience. But the literary form in which this theme is presented is extremely original. The work calls itself a Kāvya and conforms to the formal division into cantos, but in reality it goes much beyond the stereotyped Kāvya prescribed by the rhetoricians; and modern critics have found in it a lyric drama (Lassen), a pastoral (Jones), an opera (Lévi), a melodrama (Pischel) and a refined Yātrā (von Schroeder). As a creative work of art it has a form of its own, but it defies conventional classification. Though cast in a semi-dramatic mould, the spirit is entirely lyrical; though modelled perhaps on the prototype of the popular Kṛishṇa-yātrā in its choral and melodramatic peculiarities, it is yet far removed from the old Yātrā by its want of improvisation and mimetic qualities; though imbued with religious feeling, the attitude is yet eminently secular; though intended and still used for popular festival where simplicity and directness count, it yet possesses all the distinctive characteristics of a deliberate work of art. Except the introductory descriptive and narrative verses composed in the orthodox metres of classical poetry, we have interlocutions consisting of melodious Padāvalīs, which are meant to be

the *Śrīmad-bhāgavata*, which avoids all direct mention of Rādhā and describes the autumnal, and not the vernal (as in Jayadeva), Rāsa-līlā. There must have been other wide-spread tendencies of a similar kind from which Jayadeva, like Vidyāpati of later times, derived his inspiration. Even in Chaitanya's time, when *Śrīmad-bhāgavata* emotionalism was fully established (the work being the almost exclusive scripture of the Chaitanya sect), we have evidence of other currents of Vaishṇava devotionalism.

[1] That Jayadeva had no sectarian purpose is also shown by the fact that the Sahajiyā sect also regards him as its Ādi-guru and one of its nine Rasikas. The Vallabhāchāri sect also recognises the *Gīta-govinda*, in direct imitation of which Vallabhāchārya's son Viṭṭhaleśvara wrote his *Śṛiṅgāra-rasa-maṇḍana*.

sung but to which moric metres are skilfully suited; while the use of the refrain with these songs not only intensifies their haunting melody but also combines the detached stanzas into a perfect whole. We have thus narration, description and speech finely interwoven with recitation and song, a combination which creates a type unknown in Sanskrit. Again, the erotic mysticism, which expresses fervent religious longings in the intimate language and imagery of earthly passion, and of which Jayadeva's work is one of the earliest and best literary examples,[1] supplies the picturesque and emotional inflatus, in a novel yet familiar form, by transforming the mighty sex-impulse into an ecstatic devotional sentiment. All the conventions and the traditions of Sanskrit love-poetry have been skilfully utilised, and the whole effect is heightened by blending it harmoniously with the surrounding beauty of nature. All this, again, is enveloped in a fine excess of pictorial richness, verbal harmony and lyrical splendour, of which it is difficult to find a parallel. Jayadeva makes a wonderful use indeed of the sheer beauty of words and their inherent melody, of which Sanskrit is so capable; and like all artistic masterpieces, his work becomes almost untranslatable. No doubt, in all this there is deliberate workmanship, but all effort is successfully concealed in an effective simplicity and clarity, in a series of passionate and extremely musical word-pictures.

In its novelty and completeness of effect, Jayadeva's work, therefore, is unique in Sanskrit, and can be regarded as almost creating a new literary *genre*. It does not strictly follow the Sanskrit tradition, but bears closer resemblance to the spirit and style of Apabhraṁśa or vernacular poetry. The musical Padāvalīs, which form the staple of the poem, are indeed composed in Sanskrit but really conform to the vernacular manner of expression and employ rhymed and melodious moric metres which are hardly akin to older Sanskrit metres.[2] The verses are not isolated, but rhyme and refrain wind them up into compact stanzas, which, again, is a well known characteristic of vernacular song and lyric. The very term Padāvalī, which became so familiar in later Bengali song, is not found in this sense in Sanskrit, but is obviously taken from popular poetry. A consideration of these peculiarities makes Pischel

[1] With the notable exception of the *Kṛishṇa-karṇāmṛita* of Līlāśuka, of which, however, no influence is traceable in Jayadeva's poem. See *Kṛishṇa-karṇāmṛita*, ed. S. K. De, Introd., pp. xxvi-xxvii.

[2] On the use of rhyme in Sanskrit and Apabhraṁśa poetry, see Keith-*Lit.*, 197-98. The rhyme in Sanskrit is not Antya-yamaka, as Keith seems to think, but Antyānuprāsa (see *Sāhitya-darpaṇa*, x. 6); but its regular use, like that of refrain, chiefly in religious poems and Stotras, is late, and is probably due to the influence of Apabhraṁśa poetry.

suggest[1] that Jayadeva's poem goes back to an Apabhraṁśa original; but, apart from the fact that no such tradition exists, literary and historical considerations will entirely rule out the theory. It should not be forgotten that the *Gīta-govinda* was composed in an epoch when the classical Sanskrit literature was already on the decline, and when it was possible for such apparently irregular types to come into existence, presumably through the choral and melodramatic tendencies of vernacular literature, which was by this time gradually coming into prominence. It is conceivable that popular festive performances, like the religious Yātrā, with their mythological theme, quasi-dramatic presentation and preference for song and melodrama, must have reacted upon the stereotyped Sanskrit literature and influenced its spirit and form to such an extent as to produce irregular and apparently nondescript types, which approximated more distinctly to the vernacular tradition, but which, being meant for a more cultivated audience, possessed a highly stylised form. Jayadeva's *Gīta-govinda* appears to be a remarkable example of such a type, indicating, as it does, an attempt to renew and remodel older forms of composition by absorbing the newer characteristics of vernacular language and literature. That this was not an isolated attempt but an expression of a widespread literary tendency is indicated by the existence of a small but significant body of literature which exhibits similar peculiarities.[2] In these cases, the vernacular literature, developing side by side, reacted upon Sanskrit, as it was often reacted upon by Sanskrit; and the question of re-translation does not arise. It should also be noted that although the Padāvalīs follow the spirit and manner of vernacular songs, yet they accept the literary tradition of Sanskrit in their highly ornamental and stylistic mode of expression. The profusion of verbal figures, like chiming and alliteration, which are not adventitious but form an

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 27; repeated in Chatterji-*Lang.* 125-26. The fact that none of the Padāvalīs is quoted in the Sanskrit anthologies proves nothing; it only shows that the anthology-makers did not think that these songs strictly followed the Sanskrit tradition.

[2] The editor of the *Gopāla-keli-chandrikā* (of Rāmakṛishṇa of Gujarat, ed. Caland), which contains Padāvalīs of the same kind, rightly draws attention to its quasi-dramatic and choral peculiarities, and touches upon its similarity to the Swang of North-western India, as well as to the Yātrā. The *Pārijāta-haraṇa* (ed. Grierson in *JBORS.* III. 20-98) of Umāpati Upādhyāya, who probably preceded Vidyāpati, is written in Sanskrit but contains Maithili songs, *which are not translated into Sanskrit.* The *Mahānāṭaka* is another example of a so-called drama, which was undoubtedly influenced in form and spirit by popular literature; see S. K. De, *Problem of the Mahānāṭaka* (*IHQ.* 1931, pp. 553, 568-69), where this question is discussed.

integral part of its literary expression, is hardly possible in Prakrit or Apabhraṁśa which involves diphthongisation, compensatory lengthening or epenthetic intrusion of vowels, as well as elision of intervocalic consonants. It is scarcely believable that these verbal figures did not exist in the original but were added or re-composed in the presumed Sanskrit version. It is difficult, therefore, to admit that the *Gīta-govinda* was prepared in this factitious manner; and the theory of translation becomes unbelievable when one considers that Jayadeva's achievement lies more in the direction of its verbally finished form, which is inseparable from its poetic expression.

CHAPTER XII

RISE OF VERNACULAR LITERATURE

I. ORIGIN

ANTHROPOLOGY tells us that the people of Bengal are composed of diverse racial elements—North Indian ('Aryan') Longheads, 'Alpine' Shortheads, Dravido-Muṇḍā Longheads, and Mongolian Shortheads. The presence of a Negroid element (like the one found in some coastlands of India, and in South India) has been traced among the Nagas in the hills of Assam, but not so far in the Bengali people. There is a great deal of speculation about the languages spoken by these races, particularly by the Alpine Shortheads. Without connecting language with race, we find speeches of the following families spoken within Bengal from very ancient times: the Austric (Mon-Khmer and Kol), the Dravidian, the Sino-Tibetan or Tibeto-Chinese, and lastly the Indo-European (Aryan). If a Negroid people ever existed at all in Bengal (which is not unlikely), then there must have been current in very ancient times a special language among this people, which was possibly related to Andamanese. But in all likelihood this Negroid speech became extinct with the problematic Negroid inhabitants of Bengal, although we may assume that a few vocables may have survived in Austric and its successors in Bengal.[1]

Speakers of Austric—we do not know to what race or races they belonged anthropologically—are believed by some to have first entered Bengal through Assam from Northern Indo-China, their area of characterization; and it would seem that their dialects agreed with the Mon-Khmer group of Austric rather than with the Kol (Muṇḍā) group. The latter may have been a differentiation of the original Austric in Central India or Upper Gangetic India.[2]

[1] See *Indo-Aryan and Hindi* by S. K. Chatterji, Ahmedabad 1942, pp. 32-34.

[2] It should be mentioned in passing that the Hungarian scholar Hevesy Vilmos (Wilhelm von Hevesy, Guillaume de Hevesy) has tried to establish that the Kols (Muṇḍās) were distinct from the Mon-Khmers, linguistically as well as racially. According to him, the Kol speech is related to the Finno-Ugrian family, and does not belong to the Austric. A prehistoric migration of Finno-Ugrians is thus postulated as furnishing one of the racial and cultural elements in India. According to this view, the Kols would be the result of a fusion of Finno-Ugrians with earlier peoples living in India—the Austric or Austro-Asiatic Mon-Khmers and the primitive Negroids. This view has not yet received wide or general acceptance. For a *résumé* of Hevesy's

The Austrics were succeeded by the Dravidian-speakers, who would appear to have grouped themselves in the west of Bengal, and also to have penetrated into the heart of Bengal; but we know nothing of even the main lines of their settlement (much less the details) except what vague hints we can wring from the toponomy of Bengal, itself an obscure subject for lack of authentic old records. Western India, the Deccan and South India received the greatest impress from the Dravidians, and Northern India was only less influenced by them, the later Aryan impact forcing the Dravidian basis to retire into the background.

Then came the Tibeto-Chinese or Sino-Tibetan tribes belonging mainly to the Tibeto-Burman group—the Bodos and others—who overlaid the earlier Austric settlers in North and East Bengal. The linguistic situation, as a result of these migrations and mixtures of peoples which began centuries before the Christian era, must consequently have been very complex, and we have no definite or positive information about it.

Finally, the Aryans came into the scene. The advent of the Aryan speakers made the formation of the Bengali people and the rise of the Bengali language a possibility. The Aryan speech—a variety of the *Prāchya* or Ancient Eastern *Prākṛit* which was current in Magadha—overflowed into Bengal: first into West and North Bengal, and then into Central and East Bengal, with the infiltration of Magadhan settlers: merchants, soldiers, offiicials and agriculturists; and Brāhmans, Śramaṇas and Yatis, to minister to the religious needs of the Brahmanists, Buddhists and Jains and also to bring within the fold of Aryan or Upper Indian religion and culture the non-Aryan tribes of the land. In all likelihood, this infiltration or peaceful penetration of Aryan speakers started long before the political annexation of a non-Aryan Bengal (West and North Bengal) to Magadha and Upper Gangetic India in Maurya times. The speakers of non-Aryan gradually fell under the spell of the Aryan speech as they adopted the faith of the Brahman, Buddhist or Jain, and with it their common cultural *milieu.* Political connection with Mauryan Magadha only helped the movement which had begun earlier. The official language of Magadha was used in Bengal, as in the Mauryan Brāhmī inscription discovered at Mahāsthān[1] in the Bogra district of North-Central Bengal, which is the oldest contemporary document we have of history and culture in Bengal. The Maurya government undoubtedly helped the peaceful spread of

views, see "Traces of Ugrian Occupation in India" by Dr. Biren Bonnerjea, *IC.* April, 1937.

[1] *Supra* p. 44.

the Aryan speech of Magadha in Bengal and other eastern parts of India.

In this way, the Aryanization of Bengal may be said to have commenced in right earnest from the closing centuries of the first millennium B.C. The non-Aryan speeches inevitably gave way. The process is not yet complete in Bengal, as in some other parts of India, and will go on until the Kol, Dravidian and Tibeto-Burman dialects of Northern India ultimately disappear. The greater prestige of the Aryan speech, as the language of a better organized civilization and religion and as the language of the administration, was its great ally, before which the tribal dialects of the non-Aryans as vehicles of a primitive village culture had no chance.

The Bengali language, however, was not born before 900 A.D. The Aryan speech was still in the Middle Indo-Aryan (' *Prākṛit* ') stage. It is convenient to divide the history of the Aryan language in India into three periods: (1) the *Old Indo-Aryan* period, from the time that the Aryans entered India and settled in the Punjab, and spread eastward, down to the time of Buddha (roughly from 1500 B.C. to 600 B.C.), Vedic and Early Sanskrit representing this period; (2) the *Middle Indo-Aryan* period, which appears to have manifested itself in the Aryan language earlier in Eastern India than in North-Western India and which continued roughly from the time of Buddha down to 1000 A.D.—*Pāli*, Asokan and other inscriptional *Prākṛits*, and the later *Prākṛits* and *Apabhraṁśa* of literature representing the Aryan speech during this period; and (3) the *New Indo-Aryan* period, which commenced roughly about 1000 A.D., when the Modern Indo-Aryan languages (' Vernaculars ') emerged out of the *Apabhraṁśas*. Middle Indo-Aryan (' *Prākṛit* ') presents a number of strata: *Early* or *First* Middle Indo-Aryan, typified by the oldest *Prākṛits*, as in the Asokan inscriptions, and by *Pāli*; *Transitional* Middle Indo-Aryan, typified by the inscriptions from c. 200 B.C. to 200 A.D., and to some extent by the *Sauraseni Prākṛit*; *Second* Middle Indo-Aryan, 200-600 A.D., when the literary *Prākṛits* like *Mahārāshṭrī* were in use; and *Third* Middle Indo-Aryan or *Apabhraṁśa*, 600-1000 A.D., in which the *Prākṛits* die and out of which the *Bhāshās* or ' Vernaculars ' or New Indo-Aryan speeches are born.

If the speech of Magadha came to Bengal during the Maurya period, it came during the close of the first stage of Middle Indo-Aryan; and then it developed on the soil of Bengal, at first as a transplanted colonists' speech, with constant strengthening by streams of fresh emigrants during the following centuries when the language passed from the First (through the Transitional) to the Second Middle Indo-Aryan stage. It would have been very helpful

if we had specimens of the actual spoken language of Bengal and Bihar during all this period. But barring the eastern inscriptions of Asoka, and a few Brāhmī seals from Bihar, and one or two inscriptions (like the Śutanukā inscription[1] at Rāmgarh Hill in Southern Bihar), we have no authentic specimens. In the Sanskrit drama beginning from Aśvaghosha (2nd century A.D.), we have passages in a dialect called *Māgadhī* which possesses some noteworthy peculiarities (e.g. no *r* and only *l*, and only *ś* and no other sibilant; and in the later texts, *ch, j* changed into *ych, yj*; *kk, chch, ṭṭ, tt, pp* changed into *śk, śch, śṭ, śt* and *śp*; stops and aspirates in the interior always occurring as sonant stops and aspirates; and the use of the affix *-e* for the nominative singular of masculine and neuter nouns in *-a*; etc.). But we can hardly look upon this *Māgadhī* of the drama as a genuine spoken vernacular—it is rather a kind of North Indian dramatist's conception of what the backward provincials of the extreme east of Āryāvarta spoke like. We can thus use the specimens of the *Māgadhī Prākṛit* of the dramas as a sort of imitation dialect rather than the real article, like a great deal of the so-called Bāṅgāl or East Bengal dialect in Bengali dramas of the 19th and 20th centuries written by Calcutta or West Bengal writers who had never been to East Bengal.

We get a full-fledged Middle Bengali literature from that finished work, the earliest in Middle Bengali, the *Śrīkṛishṇa-kīrttana* of Ananta Baḍu Chaṇḍīdāsa, which in its present form dates from the fifteenth century and may even go back to the fourteenth. Before that, we have a few fragments of poems in what may be called Old Bengali, which undoubtedly belongs to the pre-Muhammadan period, before 1200 A.D., but which in my opinion cannot be attributed to any century earlier than the tenth. From, say, 950 A.D. on, with a gap for the century of the Turki conquest of Bengal and the century after (1200-1400 A.D.), we have a fairly continuous line of Bengali literature, with extensive enough specimens. But the history of the Bengali language when it was being evolved out of forms of late *Māgadhī Prākṛit* or *Māgadhī Apabhraṁśa* as spoken during the period 600-1000 A.D. in the five Bengals (Rāḍhā, Varendra, Vaṅga, Chaṭṭala and Samataṭa, *i.e.* West Bengal, North-Central Bengal, East Bengal, South-East Bengal and the Delta)—to which Kāmarūpa or Western Assam should be added—cannot be satisfactorily established or worked out for lack of actual remains. Doubtless, during these long centuries from the first settlement of Aryan speakers in Bengal down to the final transformation into Old Bengali, *c.* 1000 A.D., certain tendencies inherited from the Old

[1] *ASI.* 1903-4, p. 128; for other references cf. Lüders' *List*, No. 921.

Eastern *Prākṛit* became accentuated, certain innovations came in, and in addition a certain amount of non-Aryan influence (in sounds and sound attributes of vocal length and intonation, in words, and, above all, in syntax) was absorbed, when the masses in Bengal speaking their Mon-Khmer, Kol, Dravidian and Tibeto-Burman dialects adopted the Aryan *Prākṛit*. But much of it will remain a matter of linguistic speculation, although a great deal can be legitimately inferred from linguistic and anthropological investigation.

Connected specimens of the language of Magadha and Bengal (except the artificial *Māgadhī Prākṛit* passages in the Sanskrit drama mentioned above) are thus lacking from after the Maurya period (2nd cent. B.C.) to the tenth century A.D. It was during this period of over a millennium that Bengali and its sister-speeches of the Magadhan family evolved (Assamese, which is intimately connected, almost identical, with Bengali; Oriya, almost equally close to Bengali; Maithili of North Bihar and Magahi of South Bihar, which may be looked upon as twin speeches; and Bhojpuriyā of West Bihar and the Eastern United Provinces); and it is towards its close that a vernacular Bengali literature came into being. But although we lack connected specimens, individual words have been preserved for Bengali in contemporary copper-plate and other inscriptions in the form of place-names (which are often made up of common words of the language) and personal names, and in that of vernacular glosses to Sanskrit words in a commentary on the Sanskrit lexicon *Amara-kośa* by Vandyaghaṭīya Sarvānanda (this last is rather late, dating from the second half of the twelfth century,—c. 1159 A.D.—when the nucleus of an Old Bengali literature had already come into being). These single words in the inscriptions and the glosses are important: they indicate that the New Indo-Aryan stage is not yet established—at least in the formal or official style favoured in documents like the inscriptional grants: only in a few late inscriptions from the tenth century do we find any sign that the simplification of the double consonants of Middle Indo-Aryan (with a compensatory lengthening of the preceding vowel) has already set in.

The extent of vernacular literature composed in Bengal during pre-Muhammadan times is not large; and it is the fortunate preservation of some old MSS. in Nepal that has enabled us to know something of it. A great deal of the vernacular literature composed in Eastern India in general and Bengal in particular on the Sahaja School of later Mahāyāna Buddhism is preserved in Tibetan translation in the *Tanjur* (*Bstan-ḥgyur*). The Indo-Aryan—*Apabhraṁśa* and Old Bengali—originals of most of this are lost.

We have no means of ascertaining whether there was any vernacular literature in the Aryan tongue of Bengal prior to the Pāla period. Before the establishment of the Aryan speech and during the time it was spreading in the province, we may quite reasonably expect that the different Austric, Dravidian and Tibeto-Burman tribes had songs and tales, all preserved orally, in their Mon-Khmer, Kol, Dravidian, Bodo and other dialects. The Aryan speakers similarly brought their traditional tales and legends, love songs and ballads (some of them possibly in MSS.) in their Eastern *Prākṛit* from Bihar and Upper India, which were duly adopted by the people with the Aryan language and Upper Gangetic religion and culture, as part of the Aryan tradition. But no trace of it remains. New Indo-Aryan (Bengali) forms of names like *Kānha* (*Kānu* or *Kānāi*), *Rāhī* (*Rāi*), *Kāṁśa, Nānda, Āihaṇa* (*Āimana, Āyān*) are based on Middle Indo-Aryan (*Prākṛit*) folk forms like *Kaṇha, Rāhiā, Kaṁsa, Nanda, Ahivaṇṇu* or *Ahimaṇṇu* (=Old Indo-Aryan or Sanskrit *Kṛishṇa, Rādhikā, Kaṁsa, Nanda, Abhimanyu*) : and this fact goes to prove that the stories of Kṛishṇa's early life and of the love of Kṛishṇa and Rādhā at Vṛindāvana were, at least in their primitive form, known to some of the people of Bengal in the *Prākṛit* or Middle Indo-Aryan, *i.e.* pre-Muhammadan, period. There is evidence, though it only goes back to the end of the pre-Muhammadan age, that vernacular poetry was composed on the Rādhā-Kṛishṇa story. We can similarly surmise that vernacular poetry on Śiva and Durgā and other Purāṇic or Brahmanical deities already existed in *Prākṛit* and *Apabhraṁśa*-speaking Bengal.

When a vernacular speech current over a wide tract in the form of dialects has not taken a definite form, and does not possess any prestige as a *patois*, particularly among those groups which in a way set the fashion in these matters, there cannot be much deliberate and sustained literary effort in it. The educated classes in Bengal, whether Brahmans, or Kshatriya chiefs and landlords from Northern India, or Buddhist monks, or local people trained in North Indian traditions, cultivated Sanskrit, and would not dream of writing any serious work in a vernacular dialect. All the higher intellectual output of Bengal from after the settlement of Aryan speakers down to post-Chaitanya times and even later, whether in philosophy or letters or science (*e.g.* medicine), was through the medium of Sanskrit. The Buddhist Sanskrit of the early centuries after Christ, which is the result of an attempt to make *Prākṛit* look like Sanskrit, was no longer cultivated by the Buddhists, for they as much as the Brahmans took to writing correct or grammatical Sanskrit. But a tradition of a loose Sanskritized vernacular (or vernacularized

Sanskrit), as a later development of Buddhist Sanskrit, continued in Bengal, down to post-Muhammadan times, and we see it in use even among the semi-Islamized people of North-Central Bengal in the sixteenth century (*e.g.* the *Seka-śubhodayā*).[1] The Brahmanical and Buddhist writers of Sanskrit who flourished in Bengal (and Magadha) in the pre-Muslim period added lustre to Sanskrit philosophy and literature, and afforded a brilliant testimony to the greatness of the intellect and the poetic genius of Bengal during the formative period of her vernacular. In studying the origins of Bengali literature, we have got to take note (as furnishing partly the cultural background) of the literary texts in Sanskrit produced in Bengal during the Pāla and Sena periods, in both literature proper and in the inscriptions in Sanskrit.

It has already been remarked that when a vernacular is not yet well established in a definite form, and when it has not acquired sufficient prestige, the people speaking it will not take up its cultivation with any great enthusiasm. Often they will take up another speech which is more advanced, a sister-speech with a higher literary, cultural or political prestige. This is what has helped Hindustani or Hindusthani (Hindi and Urdu) to establish its position as the literary language *par excellence* among speakers of Hindki (Lahnda). Punjabi, the various Rājasthāni dialects, Garhwali and Kumaoni, Kosali (Eastern Hindi), and Bhojpuriyā, Maithili and Magadhi. A similar thing happened in Bengal a thousand to twelve hundred years ago. Western *Apabhraṁśa*, or *Śaurasenī Apabhraṁśa*, which developed out of *Śaurasenī*, the *Prākrit* of the Midland (with elements from the vernaculars of Rājputāna and the Punjab) into a great literary language, succeeded *Pāli* and *Mahārāshṭrī* as a Middle Indo-Aryan speech of high cultural significance. It came into being some time after 600 A.D., and its prestige and influence grew and spread south, west, east, and north, with the growth and spread of Rajput power from the Midland and Rājputāna to Gujarat and the Deccan, the Punjab, Central India, the Gangetic Doab and Eastern India; and even later, after the Turki conquest, when the New Indo-Aryan vernaculars were well established, this *Apabhraṁśa* speech continued its tradition as a language for poetical composition, gradually merging into New Indo-Aryan literary languages. The Western *Apabhraṁśa* came to Magadha and Bengal as an advanced speech, a ready-made literary medium, which had a wide currency as a sort

[1] The *Seka-śubhodayā*, or 'The Holy Advent of the Shaikh,' is a 16th century work in a barbarous Sanskrit-Bengali jargon, of Muhammadan authorship or inspiration, which gives an account of a miracle-working Moslem saint who came from Northern India to the court of Lakshmaṇasena, the last Hindu King of Bengal in the 12th century. Cf. *supra*, p. 180, f.n. 6.

of polished *lingua franca* all over Aryan India, and possessed a high prestige with a growing literature; moreover, it was near enough to the local vernacular to be understood without any difficulty, and this enabled it to be employed by the poets and other writers in Bihar and Bengal for literary composition. The result was that, almost as much as in Gujarāt, Rājputāna and Upper Gangetic India, *Śaurasenī Apabhraṁśa* became established in Bengal and Bihar, and local writers began to cultivate it, and in course of time built up quite a literature in it. *Śaurasenī Apabhraṁśa* was a sort of Hindi or Hindustani for Aryan India during the period 600-1000 A.D. In the hands of the Easterners in Bengal and Bihar, it took up, as was natural, some Eastern words and forms and some Eastern idioms; and its pronunciation (which is reflected in the spelling) was also modified to suit Eastern habits. The *Śaurasenī Apabhraṁśa* literature of the East, which has been recovered from Nepal, is Buddhistic in inspiration, and consists of distichs (*dohās*) and songs in couplets (*padas*) dealing with the philosophy and mysticism of the Sahaja-yāna treated in an allegorical way. The oldest of these would not appear to be older than the ninth century.

The *Śaurasenī Apabhraṁśa* as employed in Bengal developed some Bengali or Eastern Indian traits; and, as the language of some later groups of North Indian settlers into Eastern India, it also influenced the old vernaculars of the East—Bengali and Bihari. In Old Bengali, as used in the *Charyā* poems which are discussed below, a few *Śaurasenī Apabhraṁśa* traits occur, at least as literary impositions (*e.g.*, pronominal forms like *jo, so* instead of *je, śe*; past participial forms in *-u, -iu,* in place of *-ila*). And in Early Maithili, already some *Śaurasenī* forms were introduced and adopted into the language as early as the beginning of the fourteenth century (*e.g.*. *chalu, dekhu,* from Śaurasenī *chaliu, dekkhiu*=proper Early Maithili *chalala, dekhala,* 'gone, seen').

II. DEVELOPMENT

The establishment of the Pāla empire in the eighth century is unquestionably an epoch-making event in the evolution of the Bengali people and their language and culture. The vernacular of Bengal, although still in the Middle Indo-Aryan stage, took a definite form, which may be described as 'proto-Bengali,' by 800 A.D., when Dharmapāla reigned. The foundation of the Pāla empire synchronized with the birth of the Bengali people as a distinct and important group in the comity of the peoples of mediaeval and modern India. The final welding of the *Māgadhī Prākṛit* and *Apabhraṁśa* dialects current in Bengal into a uniform proto-Bengali

type, giving the basis of a national language to the province and thus providing a strong bond of union among its various and diversely derived peoples (already culturally unified by Buddhism and Brahmanism), was completed by the time that the Pāla dynasty was established. From 800 A.D. the people of Bengal had a new birth, and entered into a new career of literary and artistic endeavour, which, on the one hand, added fresh glory to the Sanskrit literature of India, and, on the other, developed the Pāla style of sculpture which was adopted in Nepal and Tibet and which also influenced the art of Burma, of Indo-China and of Indonesia. Emulating the 'Vernacular' literature in Western *Apabhraṁśa* which had doubtless already established itself in Bengal as a literary language for mass appeal, and taking note of such meagre folk-literature as may have existed orally in the vernacular dialects of Bengal, Buddhist preachers of the Sahaja school were probably the first to begin to compose *padas* or short poems of four to half-a-dozen rimed couplets in the Proto-Bengali vernacular. This became a literary tradition, and was adopted by a number of Bengali Buddhist religious poets in the following centuries.

The vernacular literature of Bengal would thus appear to have started in the following way. About a thousand years ago, two kinds of speech were in use: the *Śaurasenī Apabhraṁśa,* a sort of Hindi of a thousand years ago, which had a wide currency; and the native speech of Bengal, Proto-Bengali, which became Old Bengali by 1000 A.D. The same group of poets composed in both—in the Western (*Śaurasenī*) *Apabhraṁśa* as representing an older and pan-Aryan tradition in India, and in Proto- or Old Bengali as representing the rising local vernacular. The situation was to some extent repeated in Bengal half a millennium later, when the Bengali Vaishnava lyricists writing *padas* on the love of Rādhā and Kṛishṇa used two kinds of speech—their own native Bengali, and an artificial literary language, the *Braja-buli,* which was Early Maithili considerably modified by Bengali and showing a number of Western *Apabhraṁśa* and Early Western Hindi words and forms.

The literary output in the vernacular of Bengal during the period of its rise may now be discussed under two main heads: Buddhist and Brahmanical. Apart from this religious poetry of a two-fold inspiration, there are also a few indications of what may be called a secular literature in Bengali, which, however, was not very extensive. There is no trace of a Jaina literature in Old Bengali, although the Jaina cult was at one time in great vogue in the province, though not as much as in Western India and in the Kannada country. Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jaina—all three forms of the Hindu religion flourished in Bengal as in other

parts of India, but Jainism appears to have gradually died out, or become restricted in Bengal.

(a) *Buddhist Literature*

Before 1916, scholars were not aware of any genuine remains of Bengali language and literature before 1500 A.D. But two MSS., which were discovered by two scholars and published from the Vaṅgīya Sāhitya Parishad in 1916 and 1919, provide us with materials which enable us to trace the history of Bengali back to the fourteenth and even beyond the thirteenth century. These two works were (i) the MS. of the *Śrīkṛishṇa-kīrttana,* by Ananta Baḍu Chaṇḍīdāsa, the oldest Middle Bengali work, which was discovered in a village in Bankura district and was ably edited by the discoverer himself, Mr. Basanta Ranjan Rāy, Vidvadvallabha (in its third edition last year, 1942) ; and (ii) the MS. of the 47 *Charyā-padas,* composed by some 22 different poets, in Old Bengali, with a Sanskrit commentary, which was discovered in Nepal by the late Mahāmahopādhyāya Dr. Haraprasād Śāstrī, who, along with this *Charyā* MS. discovered three other MSS. (the *Dohās* or distichs of Saraha, the *Dohās* of Kāṇha, and the *Ḍākārṇava*),—and these three give specimens of *Śaurasenī Apabhraṁśa* literature, with Sanskrit commentaries on the *Dohās.*

These four MSS., as edited by MM. Dr. Haraprasād Śāstrī and published from the Vaṅgīya Sāhitya Parishad, have opened up a new horizon in the history of Bengali language and literature. They have established the great fact that, before the Turki conquest of Bengal some seven hundred years ago, there was a vernacular literature in Bengal, in what may be described as Old Bengali, of which the *Charyā-padas* form an important fragment. The date of the *Charyā-pada* MS. and the nature of the subject of the poems as well as their language need not be discussed in detail. Suffice it to say here that in these 47 *Charyās* we have the oldest specimens of Bengali. In the *Dohās* of Saraha and of Kāṇha, we have specimens of the *Śaurasenī Apabhraṁśa* as used by the Buddhists of Eastern India. In the *Ḍākārṇava,* we have a later and debased form of the same *Śaurasenī Apabhraṁśa.* Subsequently, other *Dohās* and *Padas* composed in the same Western or *Śaurasenī Apabhraṁśa* were discovered in Nepal by Dr. Haraprasād Śāstrī, both in late MSS. and in actual use as devotional songs in Nepalese Buddhist monasteries. And Dr. Prabodh Chandra Bagchi has similarly found more of these *Apabhraṁśa* poems in MSS. preserved in Nepal.

The character of the language of the *Charyā* songs is clear enough. It is a New Indo-Aryan speech, as it shows the charac-

teristic New Indo-Aryan simplification of the Middle Indo-Aryan double consonants, with accompanying compensatory lengthening of the preceding vowel (*e.g.*, *vṛiksha* > *rukkha* > *rūkha*, *bhakta* > *bhatta* > *bhāta*, *varṇa* > *vaṇṇa* > *bāna*, *etc.*) It is Old Bengali, and not Old Magahi, Old Maithili, Old Bhojpuriyā, or Old Oriyā, because of its specific Bengali grammatical forms (*e.g.* genitive in *-era*, dative in *-ke*, dative post-positions like *antare* > *tare* in Middle and New Bengali, locative affix *anta* > *ta* in dialectal New Bengali, locative post-position *mājhe* < *majjhahi* < *madhya-*; past and future tense bases in *-il-* and *-ib-*, and not *-al-* and *-ab-* as in the Bihari dialects Magahi, Maithili and Bhojpuriyā; conjunctives in *-iā* and *-ile*; etc.). Its idioms are Bengali, and in the *Charyās* there occur Bengali proverbs which have continued to our days. The local colour of the poems—with frequent reference to river traffic—is also Bengali. Some of the roots and forms in the language are specially Bengali. The poems, however, in spite of the care their authors took to compose them in their vernacular, show a number of Western *Apabhraṁśa* forms. This is only natural when we consider the importance of the latter language, and the chances of contamination or influence; besides, the MS. was copied in Nepal, where the introduction of better known or more familiar *Apabhraṁśa* forms by the Newari scribes could very well be expected. Maithili is spoken in a tract contiguous to Nepal; hence one or two Maithili forms have found their way into the text of these Old Bengali poems as copied in Nepal.

The subject-matter of these Old Bengali *Charyā-padas* is highly mystical, centring round the esoteric doctrines and erotic and Yogic theories and practices of the Sahajiyā school of Buddhism.[1] The Sanskrit commentary on the *Charyās*, being itself in a highly technical jargon, does not help to make the sense of the text wholly clear to modern readers, though it quotes extensively from a similar literature which is mostly in Sanskrit. The poems in the *Dohā-koshas*, or collections of *dohās* by Saraha and Kāṇha, are not so mystical, although abstruse enough: but a consideration of these, as well as of the *Ḍākārṇava*, is not directly to our purpose, as these are not in Bengali.

The date of the twenty-two authors of the 47 *Charyās* (their original number in the collection was 50, but as the MS. lacks a few pages, this is their actual number) is not known with any certainty and is still a matter of speculation and controversy. The present writer regards them as belonging to 950-1200 A.D.[2] The authors of the *Charyās* are among the 84 *Siddhas* or miracle-working saints

[1] Cf. Ch. XIII. *infra*.

[2] Chatterji-*Lang.* I. 110-124

and teachers who are honoured by the Mahāyāna Buddhists of Nepal and Tibet, and some of them are still venerated in Northern India as great (Śivaite) Yogis. Their compositions in both Old Bengali and *Śaurasenī Apabhraṁśa* were translated into Tibetan, and form part of the Tibetan *Tanjur* (*Bstan-ḥgyur*), in which work the equivalent of one of the *Charyā* poems was found by me in 1922, and Dr. Prabodh Chandra Bagchi has since found the equivalents of the remaining 49 as in the original compilation. Tibetan equivalents of the *dohās* of Saraha and Kāṇha have already been utilised by Dr. Muhammad Shahidullah in establishing the text of these *Śaurasenī Apabhraṁśa* verses.[1]

Among these Siddha poets of the *Charyās*, the most important names for establishing the chronology are those of Lui-pā, also written as Luyī-pā (author of two poems), and Kāṇha-pā or Kṛishṇa-pāda (12 poems). In one of his poems Kāṇha-pā mentions Jālandhari-pāda as if he were his *guru* (*Charyā* 36). Now, Jālandhari-pāda, *alias* Hāḍi-pā, is an important personage in the legend-cycle of Rājā Gopīchānda which is widely current throughout Aryan India, from Assam and Chittagong to the Punjab and the Maratha country. This legend-cycle centres round the unwilling renunciation of his kingdom and his wives (Adunā and Padunā) by a Rājā Gopīchānda (or Govinda-chandra) of Bengal, when he was quite a young man, at the instigation or insistence of his mother, Queen Madanāvatī, or Maynāmatī, who had come to know by her *yoga* powers that that was the only way to save her son from a premature death. Queen Maynāmatī was a disciple of Gorakh-nāth (or Goraksha-nātha), the great Śivaite Yogi and Siddha who is venerated both by Nepalese and Tibetan Buddhists and by North-Indian Brahmanists, and whose sect of Kān-phaṭā Yogis still flourishes in Hindustan, the Punjab and Rājputāna. Jālandhari-pāda, mentioned by Kāṇha in the *Charyā*, was also a disciple of Gorakh-nāth. Gorakh-nāth's master was Mīna-nātha, or Matsyendra-nātha, who is said to have obtained his esoteric knowledge from Śiva himself in an island in the ocean. In the Indian tradition, Matsyendra-nātha is described as the *Ādi-siddha*, the first of the Siddhas. The succession from him in the line of the Siddhas, so far as the Siddhas figuring in the Gopīchānda legend are concerned, is: (1) Matsyendra-nātha or Mīna-nātha, (2) Gorakh-nāth, (3) Jālandhari-pāda or Hāḍī-pā, and (4) Kāṇha-pā, Kānu-pā or Kṛishṇa-pāda. The Kāṇha-pā of the *Charyās*, who speaks of Jālandhari-pāda in one of his poems as one would speak of one's *guru*, must be identified with the person of the same name in the legend, whose *guru* was also Jālandhari; and I have further identified

[1] *Les Chants mystiques de Saraha et de Kanha*, Paris 1927.

Kāṇha-pā, the *Charyā* poet and the Siddha of the legend (he seems to refer to himself in *Charyā* 36 as *pāṇḍiāchāye* or *Paṇḍitāchārya*) with *Paṇḍitāchārya Śrī-Kaṇha-pāda,* the author of the *Hevajra-pañjikā-yoga-ratna-mālā,* a MS. of which, dated 'the 39th year of King Govindapāla,' the last Pāla rājā of Magadha (=1199 or 1200 A.D.), has been found. This would mean that the lower limit for Kāṇha-pā and also for his group is this date, which is, in round numbers, 1200 A.D., or roughly the end of the twelfth century.

According to the account given in the oldest Marathi work, the *Jñāneśvarī* of Jñānadeva (*c.* 1290), which is a translation with commentary of the *Bhagavad-gītā,* Gorakh-nāth could not have lived before the twelfth century, since Jñānadeva, the author of this genuine work, declares himself to be the disciple of his own elder brother Nivṛitti-nātha (born 1273 A.D.), who was the disciple of Goyaṇī-nātha or Gaini-nātha, whose *guru* was Gorakh-nāth, the disciple of Matsyendra-nātha; and assuming that Goyaṇī-nātha was a very old man when he initiated Nivṛitti-nātha as a boy, his *guru* Gorakh-nāth, also the teacher of Kāṇha-pā's master, Jālandhari, can be taken back not earlier than the second half of the twelfth century. But it is also likely that the *guru-paramparā,* or chain of master and pupil, given in the *Jñāneśvarī* is at fault, some names having been omitted between Goyaṇī-nātha and Gorakh-nāth. But in any case, in the absence of other evidence, the dates 1199 A.D. (for the author of the *Hevajra-pañjikā-yoga-ratna-mālā*=Kāṇha-pā, a younger contemporary of Gorakh-nāth and third in line of spiritual succession from him) and 1290 A.D. (for Jñānadeva, fourth in line from Gorakh-nāth) can very well be taken to point to the second half of the twelfth century for Gorakh-nāth.

Dr. Muhammad Shahidullah, however, relying too much on certain traditional accounts preserved in Nepal, takes Matsyendra-nātha to the seventh century A.D.; and, with the very doubtful chronology of the Tibetan author Tāranātha (*c.* 1500), he pushes back the date of the extant *Charyā* poems to some three centuries anterior to that proposed by the present writer. But Dr. Prabodh Chandra Bagchi has rightly questioned the value of the Nepalese tradition, which he regards as spurious and concocted after the thirteenth century A.D. An old MS. of the *Kaula-jñāna-nirṇaya* attributed to Matsyendra-nātha, which Dr. Bagchi found in Nepal and edited, belongs on epigraphic grounds to the middle of the eleventh century. This would be the lower limit for Matsyendra-nātha. Dr. Bagchi takes note of a certain *guru-paramparā* occurring in the Tibetan version of the *Chakra-sambara Tantra,* and suggests a date *after* 900 A.D. for Jālandhari-pāda and Kāṇha-pāda. The above work gives the following line of teachers and pupils:

Jālandhari-pāda > Kṛishṇa (=Kānha-pā) > Guhya >Vijaya-pā > Tilo-pā, contemporary of King Mahīpāla of Bengal (978-1030)> Naro-pā of Vikramaśīla monastery (the teacher of Dīpaṅkara Śrījñāna, who went to Tibet about 1035 A.D.). This date, however, does not accord with what we are warranted in deducing from the *guru-paramparā* in the *Jñāneśvarī*. Dr. Bagchi further identifies Luyī-pā, one of the *Charyā* poets mentioned above, with Matsyendra-nātha, following Tibetan authority; Luyī-pā is known as the first of the Siddhas (*Ādi-siddha*) in the Tibetan texts, and his name is given in various Indian forms and in their Tibetan translations, which are *ña-lto-pa*=Sanskrit *Matsyodara* (referring to the story that Matsyendra-nātha hid himself in the *udara* or belly of a *matsya* or fish, when he heard Śiva discoursing on the great knowledge to Umā in the midst of the ocean), and *ñahi-rgya-ma-za-ba* and *ñahi-rgyu-lto-gsol-ba,* which are equivalent to *Matsyāntrāda* ('the eater of the entrails of a fish')—which would appear to be two sobriquets of the Siddha, like Machchhaghna-nātha ('the fish-killing master') and Matsyendra, or Machchhendra ('the master of the fish').

The Indian as well as the Nepalese and Tibetan sources for the dates of Matsyendra-nātha (=Luyī-pā ?), Gorakh-nāth, Jālandhari-pāda, Kāṇha-pā and other Siddhas, who were the poets of the *Charyās,* disagree, and the indirect evidences from the colophons of the *Hevajra-pañjikā-yoga-ratna-mālā* MS. from Nepal and of the Old Marathi work the *Jñāneśvarī* are also at variance. All that we can say is that the language can hardly be dated before 900 A.D. It is only when all these sources are reconciled and harmonized by the establishment of the date of Gorakh-nāth that the chronology of the *Charyā* poets can be satisfactorily settled.[1] We may, however, remark in passing that it is very likely that a legendary Matsyendra-nātha was created as the *guru* of Gorakh-nāth, the great saint and preacher of the twelfth century, and that Luyī-pā may after all have been a different person from the mythical Matsyendra-nātha.

The *Charyā-padas* stand at the head of Bengali literature. They are in a way the prototypes or precursors of the later Bengali Sahajiyā songs, the Vaishṇava *padas,* the Śākta hymns, the Bāul songs, and even the 'Mārfatī' songs of Muhammadan (Ṣūfī) inspiration. The *Charyās* cannot be described as literature proper—their appeal and intention are primarily religious. They lack literary beauty in the true sense of the word. Their importance is primarily linguistic and doctrinal. Yet here and there we find couplets which breathe true poetry, in spite of the atmosphere not being particularly poetical.

[1] For a fuller discussion on this point, cf. *supra* pp. 331 ff.

several metres are used, and the poems are true lyrics which were meant to be, and undoubtedly were, sung—the MS. gives the names of the *rāgas* to which they were sung. The metres are all *mātrā-vṛitta* or moric metres of *Apabhraṁśa* and New Indo-Aryan, the commonest being the *Pādākulaka,* which is a rimed distich with 16 *moræ* in each line. The mediaeval Bengali, Assamese and Oriya metre *Payāra* (< *padākāra*) or *Lāchāḍī* (< *rathyā-?*), which is found also in Bhojpuriyā, originated out of this *Pādākulaka.*

The *Charyās* are by their very nature obscure, and this obscurity has been very much strengthened by the text as we have it being very corrupt. It is hoped that by collating this corrupt and often mutilated text with the Tibetan translations found by Dr. Bagchi, it will be possible to establish the Old Bengali in something like its original form, and to clear up the obscurities. Dr. M. Shahidullah of Dacca University has published valuable studies in this connexion. As samples of these oldest specimens of Bengali writing, two of the *Charyā* poems are given below, the original in Roman transliteration (with the orthography as given in Haraprasād Śāstrī's Bengali edition emended in the light of the commentary and of Bengali linguistics) and a literal English translation.[1]

[1] In the two transcribed *Charyā-padas* given below, *v* in the middle of a word has been transcribed *w,* following Early New Indo-Aryan phonology.

(i) *Charyā 5*: Author, Chāṭila; Mode (*Rāga*), Guñjarī (Gūjarī).

bhawa-naī gahaṇa, gambhira begem bāhī;
duānte chīkhila—mājhe na thāhī.
dhāmārthe Chāṭila sāṅkaṁwa gaḍhaī,
pāra-gāmi loa nībhara taraī.
phāḍia moha-taru pāṭī joḍai:
ādaa diḍhi tāṅgi nībāṇe kohai.
sāṅkaṁwa-ta chaḍile dāhiṇa bāṃwa mā hohi:
niaḍi bohi, dūra ma jāhī.
jai tumhe, loa he, hoiba pāra-gāmī,
pūchha-tu Chāṭila aṇuttara-sāmī.

'The Ocean of Being is deep, and it flows with mighty force:
On two sides, mire—in the middle, no bottom.
For the sake of *dharma,* Chāṭila builds a bridge;
People who go across pass on in full reliance.
Splitting the tree of ignorance, he joins the planks:
With the strong axe of *Advaya* (Monism) he strikes at *Nirvāṇa.*
Do not turn right or left on mounting the bridge:
Bodhi (Supreme Wisdom) is near—do not go far.
O ye men, if ye will be goers-across,
Ask of Chāṭila, the master without a peer.'

(ii) *Charyā 35*: Author, Bhāde or Bhādra-pāda; Mode, Mallārī.

eta kāla hauṃ āchhila sva-mohem:
ebe maīṃ būjhila sad-guru-bohem.

The analogous Western *Apabhraṁśa* compositions of these Buddhist teachers need not detain us. Their extent is not very large in the specimens so far published; but some more distichs and *padas* of the same type have been promised. They present an interlude in early Bengali literature, and their language is a standing testimony to the cultural influence of Upper India in Bengal.

(*b*) *Brahmanical Literature*

That Brahmanical Hindus also composed religious poems and songs, dealing with the deeds and the glory of the various Gods and Goddesses or forms of the Divinity, and inculcating faith in them, has been suggested before. Actual specimens of such poems in the vernaculars (Old Bengali and Western *Apabhraṁśa*) are not available in Bengal, but specimens are not wholly lacking—and there is also some indirect evidence of this. The Sanskrit encyclopædia *Mānasollāsa* or *Abhilāshārtha-chintāmaṇi,* compiled in Śaka 1051=1129 A.D. under the auspices of king Someśvara III Bhūlokamalla of the later Chālukya dynasty of Mahārāshṭra (1127-1138 A.D.), contains in its section on Music and Songs (*Gīta-vinoda*) some songs in the different vernaculars, among which are fragments in Old Bengali relating to some of the incarnations of Vishṇu and to the sports of Kṛishṇa with the *gopīs* or milk-maids of Vṛindāvana.[1] These songs were composed in Bengal, and probably took some time to travel to Mahārāshṭra.

The *Gīta-govinda* of Jayadeva (end of the 12th century) has a number of *padas* or songs, set in the Sanskrit framework of the poem, which used to be, and still are, sung to music. Except in

ebe chīa-rāa ma-kū naṭhā:
gaaṇa-samūde ṭaliā paīṭhā.
pekhaṃwi daha-diha, sarba hi śūna:
chīa-bihūṇe pāpa na pūna.
Bājule dila moha-kakhu bhaṇiā,
maïṃ ahārila gaaṇa-ta paṇiā.
Bhāde bhaṇaï—abhāge laïlā:
chia-rāa maïṃ ahāra kaïlā.

'For such a (long) time I remained in my ignorance:
Now by me it has been understood through the teaching of the Good Master.
Now Mind, the king (*chitta-rājā*), for me is destroyed;
It has leant towards and entered the Ocean of the Sky.
I behold the ten quarters: all is Void.
Without the Mind, no sin nor merit.
Bājula (my *guru*) has described it to me:
By me the water has been drunk in the sky.
Bhāde says: Ill-luck has been taken (by me):
Mind, the king, has been eaten up by me.'

[1] Chatterji-*Lang*. II. 1063-1065.

the outward form of the language—in grammar and in the forms of words—these *padas* of the *Gīta-govinda* appear to be more in the *Prākṛit* or Vernacular spirit than in Sanskrit: in their metre, their style and execution, and in their general feel, they are vernacular, *i.e.* Western *Apabhraṁśa* or Old Bengali. It has been suggested by some scholars—and the suggestion is worth consideration—that these *padas* were originally composed in the Old Bengali vernacular or in Western *Apabhraṁśa,* and then Sanskritized by slightly tinkering with the words.[1] We have in this way some disguised vernacular poems in this Sanskrit lyrical gem. The tradition of composing Vaishṇava *padas* in the style of the *Gīta-govinda* never died out in Bengal; and after the revival of the Kṛishṇa cult under Chaitanya, it was taken up with redoubled enthusiasm in the sixteenth century, giving rise to the brilliant literature of Vaishṇava lyrics in Bengali. Whether the *padas* of the *Gīta-govinda* were originally in the vernacular or not, there is no doubt that Jayadeva was a great, perhaps the greatest, poet of pre-Muhammadan Bengal, whose equal did not appear until after two centuries, when Baḍu Chaṇḍīdāsa is believed to have flourished.

The *Prākṛita-paiṅgala,* an anonymous work on '*Prākṛit*' versification, with poems illustrating the various metres described forming a valuable *Apabhraṁśa* anthology, which was compiled towards the end of the fifteenth century, has some verses (in *Śaurasenī Apabhraṁśa*) which possess Bengali affinities in their vocabulary and in general spirit. These verses are both religious, invoking or praising the Brahmanical gods, and secular. Some of these have a family resemblance to the *padas* in the *Gīta-govinda* of Jayadeva (*e.g.* the poems on pp. 207, 570, 576, 586, in the edition of the *Prākṛita-paiṅgala* published by the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta 1902), and may have been composed in Bengal.

Two *Apabhraṁśa* poems ascribed to Jayadeva, in a very mutilated form, are quoted in the Śikh *Ādi-Grantha,* under *Rāg Gūjarī* and *Rāg Mārū.*

All these are good indications of the presence of a Brahmanical religious literature—mostly lyrical—in pre-Muhammadan Bengal, in either Western *Apabhraṁśa,* or Old Bengali, or in both.

(c) *Secular Poetry*

Echoes of love poetry and other general poetry from Bengal (*e.g.* describing the seasons, or conditions of men), not connected with any cult or philosophy, are found in post-Muhammadan works.

[1] See *supra* p. 372.

Poems like those on pp. 9, 10, 304, 403, 408, 453, 470, 496, 513, 541, 545, 550, 563 in the Asiatic Society of Bengal's edition of the *Prākṛita-paiṅgala* present some Bengali features in words and forms and frequently in style and spirit, and might well have been composed in pre-Muhammadan Bengal. But as they stand, they cannot be fully claimed for Early Bengal: their Bengal origin can only be conjectured. In the *Seka-śubhodayā*,[1] Chapter XIX, a love-poem is quoted which from its style and metre (the language has been modified to Middle Bengali) can be referred to the twelfth century. The Middle Bengali couplets and short poems ascribed to Ḍāk, a person of proverbial, almost uncanny, wisdom, and to Khanā, who is looked upon as a woman mathematician and astronomer of Ancient India (round whose name a number of legends have gathered, connecting her with Varāhamihira, the well-known astronomer of Early Medieval India), may be based on pre-Muhammadan Old Bengali *Spruche* poetry of popular origin.

These are about all we possess to demonstrate the rise and development of a vernacular literature in pre-Muhammadan Bengal. As for the rest, we may make some legitimate conjectures. With the *Gīta-govinda* before us, the existence of a vernacular lyrical drama,[2] on the story of Rādhā and Krishṇa, may be postulated as the basis or model for Jayadeva's work: certainly, Ananta Baḍu Chaṇḍīdāsa followed an old pre-Muhammadan tradition in his *Śrīkṛishṇa-kīrttana*, in which we have narrative combined with dialogue, both in verse, and both intended to be recited or sung. The *Rāmāyaṇa*, the *Mahābhārata* and the Purāṇas used to be read and explained by learned Brāhmans, as much as in later times in Bengal, for the benefit of the masses who could not read Sanskrit. The vernacular translation and commentary, combined with religious and moral exhortation and philosophical discussion, and highly dramatic narrative with humour and with characterization, could not but have its influence in the creation of a vernacular literature. All the learning of the Sanskrit scholar was in this way brought to bear upon the vernacular and lead to its enrichment—at first orally, and then by means of written compositions. The way in which a vernacular Indo-Aryan speech was enriched with learned words from the Sanskrit can be seen from the *Varṇa-ratnākara*,[3] the oldest work in Maithili

[1] See *supra* p. 380, f.n. 1.

[2] Something like the *Pālā-gān*, or narrative poems chanted, with dialogues in between, which were so common in mediaeval Bengal, or even something approaching the *Yātrā-gān*, or regular musical drama, with as much dialogue by characters in costume as singing by a chorus, which became prominent in later times.

[3] Edited by S. K. Chatterji and Babua Misra, in the *Bibliotheca Indica*, Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta 1941.

(*c.* 1325 A.D.), which is a sort of handbook for *Kathakas* or Brahman story-tellers from the Purāṇas and the epics, giving pattern descriptions and enumerations of things which are brought in as embellishments within the narrative.

We cannot, however, assert that Old Bengali adaptations or versions of the Sanskrit epics and Purāṇas actually existed before 1200 A.D., though their existence is highly probable. The stories of Chānd the merchant and his son Lakhindar and daughter-in-law Behulā, of the merchant Dhanapati, his wives Lahanā and Khullanā, and his son Śrīmanta, and their trading expeditions to Cyelon, of the hunter Kālaketu and his wife Phullarā, which we find in a series of long narrative poems in Middle Bengali from the fifteenth century onwards and which were intended to glorify the goddesses Padmā or Manasā and Durgā or Chaṇḍī, may have had their prototypes in pre-Muhammadan times. And the epic or romantic tales of partially Buddhist inspiration with a possible historical basis, *viz.*, the story of the young King Gopīchānd renouncing his realm, the story of Prince Lāu Sen (the son of Princess Rañjāvatī, sister-in-law of the Pāla king of Bengal), the devotee of the God Dharma, who fought and killed the redoubtable chief, Ichhāi Ghosh of Ḍhekur-gaḍh, and performed other romantic feats of valour, certainly took shape in some form or other, possibly as narrative ballads, during the Sena period. The stories of Lāu Sen and of Gopīchānd, of Kālaketu and of Śrīmanta and of Lakhindar and Behulā, form the distinctive romantic legends of Bengal—a sort of veritable 'matter of Bengal,' as differentiated from what may be described as the 'matter of the Sanskrit (or Ancient Hindu) world' in the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* and in the Purāṇas.

To sum up: it would appear that the non-Aryan-speaking tribes of Bengal began to receive among them Aryan-speaking settlers from Magadha and Upper India from the closing centuries of the first millennium B.C., gradually became Aryanized in speech by the middle of the first millennium A.D., and were thus welded into an important Aryan-speaking people, which, with an intellectual aristocracy of Brahmans and Buddhist Śramaṇas (the former to a large extent of Upper Indian origin) and a political aristocracy of local Aryanized chiefs and domiciled North Indian courtiers, officials and soldiers, soon made great progress both in organization and in learning and the arts. The foundation of the Pāla empire almost went hand in hand with the formation of a Proto-Bengali speech out of the *Māgadhī Prākṛit* and *Māgadhī Apabhraṁśa* dialects which had come to Bengal. Western *Apabhraṁśa,* a sort of Hindi or Hindustani of Aryan India from *c.* 600 to 1200 A.D., came to Bengal,

and was also cultivated by Bengali writers, Buddhist and Brahmanical; and it would appear that almost simultaneously with the formation of an Old Bengali speech (with some of the distinct characteristics of Bengali as distinguished from its sisters and immediate cousins, Oriya, Maithili, Magahi and Bhojpuriyā), a vernacular literature arose in the tenth century, some authentic fragments of which have fortunately been recovered, notably in the Buddhist *Charyā-padas* preserved in Nepal.

CHAPTER XIII

RELIGION

I. DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGIOUS IDEAS

i. Introduction of Aryan Culture

It has been noted above (*v. supra* pp. 7 ff.) that the Vedic *Saṁhitās* completely ignore the lands now comprised within the province of Bengal, and that a single *Brāhmaṇa* text, and probably also an *Āraṇyaka*, that refer to its peoples, do so in disparaging terms. Even the later work Bodhāyana *Dharmasūtra* regards the country as altogether outside the pale of Vedic culture.[1]

This is all the more striking since we know that the Vedic culture had extended up to Mithilā (North Bihar) at a very early period, and there was no natural barrier to stop its penetration into North Bengal up to the Brahmaputra river. Further, some *Sūtra* texts indirectly admit that spiritual culture, even as understood by the Vedic Aryans, was not altogether wanting in Bengal. Thus it is said in the Vāsishṭha *Dharmasūtra* (i. 13-15) that according to the Bhāllavins spiritual pre-eminence is found wherever the black antelope grazes, the boundary being, in the west the Indus, and in the east, the region where the sun rises.[2]

It is, therefore, urged by some scholars that we must not place too much reliance on the conventional statements in Bodhāyana *Dharmasūtra* and accept its evidence as historically accurate for the period represented by this class of literature.[3] But whatever force there may be in this contention, we cannot admit, in the absence of positive evidence, that Aryan culture made much headway in Bengal, even in the period represented by the *Sūtras*. The linguistic and ethnological evidence render it highly probable that Bengal was till then mostly peopled by non-Aryan races. It may, at best, be presumed that they had a developed culture of their own even though it was non-Vedic and non-Aryan.

[1] *Supra* pp. 8. 290 ff. Hiraṇyakeśin in his *Śrautasūtra* (xvii. 6) makes a similar statement. See S. Lévi, *Pre-Aryan and Pre-Dravidian in India* (tr. P. C. Bagchi), pp. 73-74.

[2] It is to be noted, however, that the opinion of the Bhāllavins is also quoted by Bodhāyana immediately before the passage referred to above. Evidently he did not put much weight on it (*SBE*. xiv. 147-48).

[3] H. C. Chakladar, Presidential Address, Anthropological Section (*PSC*. xxiii); and "Contribution of Bihar to Vedic Culture" (*PTOC*. vi. 507).

The Great Epic and the Buddhist and Jaina literature show that the people of Bengal were gradually brought under the influence of Aryan culture by the monks and warriors of the Middle Country. It is difficult to assign precise dates, but Bengal must have come into intimate contact with the culture of the Middle Land by the fourth century B.C. when the sovereign of the dual monarchy of Bengal and South Bihar ruled over an extensive empire stretching from the upper Jumna to the mouths of the Ganges. Since that period Bengal came under the influence of all the three principal religions *viz.* Vedic, Buddhist and Jaina. As always happens, the primitive culture of Bengal was profoundly affected by the impact of a superior civilisation, and we possess very little knowledge of the old religious faiths and beliefs of her people. These must have influenced the forms of their adopted religion in many ways, and may lurk in folk-religions and popular superstitions even now; but it is not possible to draw any definite picture, save in very broad outline, of the pre-Aryan culture in Bengal (cf. *infra*, Ch. XV. § I.).

So far as it is possible to judge from the scanty evidence at our disposal, the evolution of Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jaina religions in Bengal seems to have followed the same broad lines as in the rest of India during the early centuries of the Christian era. It is not till we come to the Gupta age, when contemporary epigraphic evidence is available, that we are in a position to trace the detailed history of any of them.

II. BRAHMANICAL RELIGION

1. *Vedic culture*

The diffusion of Vedic culture, not only in Eastern India but also in other regions which were outside the pale of Vedic civilisation according to the *Dharmasūtras*, is abundantly proved by epigraphic evidence since the Gupta period.[1]

The copper-plate grants, referred to above in Chapters IV and V (*supra* pp. 49-51), contain the names of a large number of Brāhmaṇas settled in Bengal, some of whom are specified as belonging to the Ṛigvedic, Yajurvedic (Vājasaneya) and Sāmavedic schools, and to Bharadvāja, Kāṇva, Bhārgava, Kāśyapa, Agastya, Vātsya and Kauṇḍinya *gotras*. Most of these inscriptions refer to grant of lands to Brāhmaṇas which was considered an act of piety leading to the increase of the religious merit (*puṇya*) of the donor and his

[1] Cf. Gupta inscriptions in *CII.* III.

parents. The objects of these grants were to enable the Brāhmaṇas to perform the *Agnihotra* and the five *Mahāyajñas* (great sacrifice),[1] to build the temples of various Brahmanical gods, and make endowments for defraying expenses of daily worship, repair of temples, continuance of *bali, charu, satra,* the supply of cow's milk, incense, and flowers, and the maintenance of *madhuparka,* lamp, *etc.* Villagers also purchased lands with the object of settling some prominent Brāhmaṇas for the enhancement of merits (*puṇya*) of themselves and their parents. Reference is made in one of these records[2] to settlement of Brāhmaṇas, versed in the four Vedas, even in the easternmost regions of Bengal, full of dense forest, where tigers and other wild animals roamed at large. The most interesting account of such settlements is furnished by the Nidhanpur CP.[3] which refers to the settlement in Sylhet of 205 Brāhmaṇas belonging to various *gotras* and such Vedic *śākhās* as *Vājasaneyī, Chārakya* and *Taittirīya* of the *Yajurveda, Chhāndoga* of the *Sāmaveda* and *Vāhvṛichya* of the *Ṛigveda.* The inscriptions of the 5th, 6th and 7th centuries A.D. thus fully demonstrate the influx of the Vedic culture in Bengal.

The Vedic culture gathers further strength in Bengal in the Pāla period. Inscriptions of this period contain abundant references to grants made to Brāhmaṇas versed in the study of *Vedas, Vedāṅgas, Mīmāṁsā* and *Vyākaraṇa,* and capable of performing Vedic sacrifices.[4] The author of a work called *Haricharita*[5] refers to grants made by Dharmapāla to Brahmins adept in Vedic studies. In the Bādāl Pillar inscription (No. 16) there is mention of a Brahmin family attached to the study of the Vedas and of the "sacrificial fire properly maintained by them." A member of the same family is referred to in the Bhagalpur Plate of Nārāyaṇapāla (No. 14) as a Brahmin well versed in the Vedas and Vedāṅgas and an adept in the performance of sacrifices.

[1] For the meaning of the five great sacrifices cf. *Manu-saṁhitā,* III. 69-71. A Gurjara inscription, dated A.D. 736, refers to *bali, charu, vaiśvadeva, agnihotra,* and *atithi* as the Pañcha-mahāyajña (*EI.* XXIII. 152, 155).

[2] Tippera CP. (*EI.* XV. 307, 311), ll. 24-5.

[3] *Kam. Sas.* 1 ff. The original settlement goes back to the sixth century A.D.

[4] *Cf.* Pāla Inscriptions (*v. supra* pp. 173 ff) specially Nos. 6, 16, 31; D. M. Bhattacharyya in *HSL.* II. 202 ff.

[5] The author of the *Haricharita,* Chaturbhuja, says that his ancestors had received the village of Karañja in Varendra from Dharmapāla, and that the Brahmins of that village were versed in the Vedas, Smṛitis and other branches of study (H. P. Sastri, *Nepal Cat.* I. 134; D. M. Bhattacharya, *op. cit.* 208). But we do not know whether this Dharmapāla was the famous Pāla emperor. Some regard him as the king who was defeated by Rājendra Choḷa (*supra* p. 138). *Cf.* J. M. Roy, *Ḍhākār Itihāsa,* II. 107.

In the eleventh and twelfth centuries the Vedic culture made a great headway in Bengal under the patronage of the Varman and Sena kings. The inscription of Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva refers to hundred villages inhabited by Sāvarṇa *gotra* Brāhmaṇas versed in the Vedic lore.[1] The Belāva CP. of Bhojavarman[2] refers to grant of land in the province of Puṇḍravardhana to Brahmins who were attached to the studies of the Vedas, and who came from Uttara-Rāḍhā. The same plate refers to the zeal of the Varman family for the three Vedas which are described as the only protection of men (*lit.* covering the nakedness of men). The names of Vedic *śākhās* like Kauthumī, Āśvalāyana, Kāṇva, and Paippalāda are still mentioned in the inscriptions of the Sena kings, and Sāmantasena, who is called a Brahmavādī, retires in his old age to a hermitage on the Ganges "which is fragrant with the sacrificial smoke, and where the young deer sucks the breast of the kind-hearted wives of the hermits and the parrots recite the Vedas."[3]

The inscriptions contain references to immigrations of Brāhmaṇas to Bengal from Madhyadeśa (Middle Country), as well as emigration of Bengali Brāhmaṇas to other provinces. Such migrations were evidently not uncommon and must be the basis of stories like that of Ādiśūra who is said to have imported five Brāhmaṇas from Kanauj because there was none in Bengal who knew Vedic sacrifices. Similar stories are told of other kings and there is no justification in regarding these anecdotes as historical. For in view of the epigraphic evidence, referred to above, it is difficult to believe that Brahmins proficient in performance of Vedic sacrifices were conspicuous by their absence in Bengal at any particular period. The question will be further discussed in connection with social history (*v. infra* Ch. XV App. I).

We have, therefore, every reason to suppose that the revival of the Vedic culture in the Midlands under the Imperial Guptas led to an influx of the orthodox Vedic culture to Bengal. This culture began to be carried by Brahmins from the Midlands already in the 5th century A.D., and with the extension of patronage to such Brahmins by the kings of Bengal, the movement received a great impetus from the middle of the 7th till the 12th century A.D.[4]

[1] v. 3. (*IB.* 33, 36). [2] *IB.* 19.

[3] *IB.* 51. It is to be noted, however, that Halāyudha, the great scholar at the court of Lakshmaṇasena laments the general decline in Vedic scholarship in Bengal in his days (see *infra* Ch. XV).

[4] The ancient Sanskrit literature of Bengal also bears ample testimony to the activity of Vedic scholars (cf. *supra* Ch. XI).

2. *Introduction of Purāṇic Mythology and Religion*

But although the Vedic culture never ceased to be a living force, the Brahmanical religion, as is well known, underwent great modifications in the early centuries of the Christian era. During the Gupta period the new forms of Brahmanism had already taken deep roots in the minds of the people. The Vedic gods had mostly disappeared and their places taken by new divinities whom we call "Purāṇic." Even in the early Gupta inscriptions we meet with gods who, although Vedic in name, have no real connection with the Vedic ritual.[1] They belong to the mythology of the epics and the Purāṇas. This mythology had begun to captivate the minds of the people already in the Kushān period[2] and with the establishment of new cults the mythology went on developing throughout the Gupta period. Bengal was not isolated from this wave of popular religion and the inscriptions of the Guptas, Pālas, Senas and other dynasties discovered in Bengal bear ample testimony to it.

Indra in these inscriptions[3] appears as the lord of the gods whose consort is Paulomī, a model of fidelity. He is also called Purandara who suffers defeat at the hands of the Daityas led by their king Bali.[4] Lakshmī, although restless by nature, is a faithful consort of Hari or Kshmāpati who is born from the Ocean. She is a co-wife of Vasudharā or earth and often rides on Garuḍa with her lord Murārī.[5] Vishṇu is no longer the old God of the Bhāgavatas, but Kṛishṇa with his numerous names Śrīpati, Kshmāpati, Murārī, Janārdana[6] *etc.* which speak of his various exploits described in the epics and the Purāṇas. He also appears as Gopāla, the child-god who, though born of Devakī, was carried to Yaśodā and brought up by her.[7] But his worshippers in Bengal do not forget that this child-god is only an *avatāra*[8] of Vishṇu, as he is spoken of as the lord of Lakshmī. The other *avatāras*[9] of Vishṇu are also known. The Dwarf (Vāmana) incarnation is invoked to show how Vishṇu subdued Bali, the lord of the Daityas, who had ousted Indra from the heavens, and also to illustrate the magnitude of the sacrifice made by Bali. The incarnations of Kṛishṇa, Narasiṁha and Paraśu-

[1] For references to the various aspects of these gods, *viz.* Vishṇu, Kṛishṇa, Śiva, Indra, Varuṇa, Yama, Kuvera, Kārtikeya *etc.*, see Fleet, *CII.* III. Index (under the various names, where precise references are given).

[2] *Cf.* R. P. Chanda, *Archaeology and Vaishṇava Tradition*; R. G. Bhandarkar, *Vaishṇavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious Systems*, pp. 119, 150, 154.

[3] Pāla Ins. Nos. 2, 14, 16. [4] Nos. 6, 14. [5] Nos. 2, 6, 14, 16.

[6] Nos. 6, 14, 16, 36, 37. [7] No. 16. [8] No. 16.

[9] Nos. 6, 14. Belāva and Tarpandīghi CP. (*IB.* 19, 101).

rāma are also known, and the amorous dalliances of Kṛishṇa with one hundred Gopīs are also not forgotten.[1]

The Sun-god (driving in a chariot drawn by seven horses) is described as the right eye of Hari[2] and giver of fruit (*dātā*), and reference is made to his humbling the Vindhya through the sage Agastya.[3] The Moon-god Chandra who bears the mark of a hare (*śaśadhara*) is born from the ocean. He is also called Śītāṁśu, and Rohiṇī and Kānti (?) are his wives. In another place, Chandra is said to have been a descendant of Atri.[4] The sea is the abode of Varuṇa or Ambupati.

Among other Purāṇic myths there are allusions to those of Hutabhuja and Svāhā, Dhanapati (Guhyakapati, Kuvera) and his consort Bhadrā, Brahmā born from the lotus that sprang from the navel of Vishṇu and his consort Sarasvatī,[5] *etc.*

Pṛithu, Sagara, and other Purāṇic heroes became objects of veneration.[6] As models of donors are invoked Bali, the king of the Daityas of the Satya-yuga, Bhārgava of the Tretā, and Karṇa, the king of Champā of the Dvāpara.[7] Bṛihaspati, the preceptor of gods is the model of wisdom.[8] The myths of Agastya's drinking the ocean[9] and Paraśurāma's campaign[10] against the Kshatriyas are well known. The heroic exploits of Rāma who bridged the sea at Rāmeśvara[11] and the examples of Pṛithu, Dhanañjaya, Nala, Yayāti, Ambarīsha, Sagara *etc.*, inspired the kings of Bengal.[12]

Many of the myths connected with Śiva and his consort are known. Sarvāṇī is a model of fidelity, and so also is Umā. Satī dies at an early age in the sacrifice of Daksha before giving a child to Śiva.[13] He is known as Sadāśiva and Ardhanārīśvara, Dhūrjaṭi and Maheśvara are only his different names, and Kārtikeya and Gaṇeśa are his two sons.[14]

These gods and goddesses did not belong to the world of myth only; the cult of many of them had been definitely established in Bengal as early as the Gupta period. This is proved not only by references to them in inscriptions, but also by the numerous images discovered in Bengal. In the absence of written texts the nature and importance of the different cults can best be studied from their iconographical representations, and these have been dealt with in

1 Belāva Plate (*IB.* 19). 2 No. 50. 3 Deopārā Ins. (*IB.* 55).
4 Nos. 2, 16; Belāva CP. (*IB.* 19). 5 No. 2. 6 No. 6.
7 No. 6. 8 Nos. 16, 50. 9 No. 16. 10 *Ibid.*
11 No. 6.
12 Nos. 1, 6; also Faridpur plates (*IA.* 1910, pp. 193 ff.).
13 No. 16.
14 Barrackpur and Naihati plates (*IB.* 50, 64).

the second part of this chapter. Here we shall only briefly indicate the main outline of the development of the various cults, beginning with the most important ones associated with gods Vishṇu and Śiva.

3. *Vaishṇavism*

The earliest definite reference to the worship of Vishṇu in Bengal occurs in the Susunia inscription. It is engraved, along with a *chakra* (discus), on the back wall of a cave, now destroyed, on the Susunia Hill, about 12 miles to the north-west of the town of Bankura. It mentions king Chandravarman (*supra* p. 48) as a devotee of Chakrasvāmin[1] (wielder of discus), a well-known name of Vishṇu. The representation of the discus on the wall probably indicates that the cave was originally intended to be a temple of Vishṇu. A temple of Govindasvāmin was founded in the first part of the 5th century A.D. in the Bogra district,[2] and two temples of Śveta-Varāhasvāmin and Kokāmukhasvāmin were set up, towards the close of that century, in the Himālaya (*lit.* on the summit of the Himālaya mountains) in North Bengal.[3] About the same time, or early in the 6th century A.D., a temple of Pradyumneśvara was set up in Tippera district.[4] All these gods were presumably forms of Vishṇu whose cult thus seems to have established itself all over Bengal by the 5th century A.D. It is interesting to note that a record of the 7th century A.D.[5] refers to the worship of Bhagavān Ananta-Nārāyaṇa even in the eastern extremity of Bengal, "in the forest region, having a thick network of bush and creepers where deer, buffaloes, boars, tigers, serpents *etc.* enjoy pleasures of home life".

[1] According to the interpretation of the record by MM. Haraprasād Śāstrī king Chandravarman is referred to as "chief of the slaves of Chakrasvāmī" (*EI.* XIII. 133). Mr. K. N. Dikshit, however, takes the record to mean that "the village Dhosagrāma was made over to Chakrasvāmin" by king Chandravarman (*ASI.* 1927-28, p. 188).

[2] Baigram CP. (*EI.* XXI. 78).

[3] Dāmodarpur C.P. Nos. IV, V (*EI.* XV. 137 ff.). According to *Varāha Purāṇa* (Ch. 140), Kokāmukha in the Himālayas was the most favourite residence of Vishṇu (v. 10) and contained his best image. The reference to the Kauśikī and Trisrotā rivers in the neighbourhood (vv. 72, 75) seems to locate the place in North Bengal, and it is probable that the temple and image of Kokāmukhasvāmin, referred to in the Dāmodarpur Plate No. IV, were set up in that sacred place. If this assumption be true, we must hold that a spot in the Himālayas in North Bengal had come to be recognised as a sacred place to the Vaishṇavas as early as the 5th century A.D. Dr. D. C. Sircar takes Kokāmukhasvāmin as a form of Śiva (*IC.* V. 432-33).

[4] Gunaighar CP. (*IHQ.* VI. 40).

[5] Tippera CP. (*supra* p. 88).

The Kṛishṇa-legend seems to have formed an essential element of Vaishṇavism in Bengal as early at least as the 6th or 7th century A.D. The most important archaeological evidence is supplied by the sculptures at Pāhārpur,[1] the oldest of which probably belongs to the 6th and 7th centuries A.D., and the latest to the 8th. In the oldest group there are representations of various incidents from the life of Kṛishṇa, such as his uprooting the twin Arjuna trees, killing the demon Keśin *etc.* Balarāma is also represented and also the fight of Kṛishṇa and Balarāma with Chāṇūra and Mushṭika, the wrestlers of Kaṁsa. Incidents of the early life of Kṛishṇa at Gokula are also depicted. There are representations of Vāsudeva's carrying the new born Kṛishṇa to Gokula, Kṛishṇa and Balarāma with the cowherd boys, Kṛishṇa's holding up the mount Govardhana, amorous scenes with the Gopīs *etc.* Special interest attaches to one of these sculptured panels in which Kṛishṇa is represented as engaged in amorous activities with a lady. Mr. K. N. Dikshit has taken the latter to be Rādhā, but this may be justly doubted. She is more probably to be identified with Rukmiṇī or Satyabhāmā. While these sculptured representations undoubtedly testify to the popularity of Kṛishṇa, and it is difficult to dissociate him from Vaishṇavism of the period as some have attempted to do, we must remember that the Pāhārpur reliefs are not so many cult objects proper, but are mainly used for decorative purposes in a monument avowedly Buddhist in character. But they leave no doubt that the Kṛishṇa-legend was highly popular and the Kṛishṇa cult had a special hold in Bengal by the 7th century A.D.

From the 8th century onwards the development of Vaishṇavism in Bengal is proved by a large number of epigraphic records. The Khālimpur CP.[2] of Dharmapāla speaks of a *devakula* of the god Nanna-Nārāyaṇa and a Garuḍa pillar is erected during the reign of Nārāyaṇapāla.[3] Lakshmaṇasena and his successors, Keśava and Viśvarūpa, show special leaning to the Vaishṇavite cult and their inscriptions begin with the invocation of Nārāyaṇa,[4] while the god Dāmodara is invoked in a contemporary inscription discovered at Chittagong.[5] Although the predecessors of Lakshmaṇasena were devoted to the god Sadāśiva, Vijayasena made a gift to a temple of Pradyumneśvara (special form of Harihara).[6] A large number

[1] These have been discussed in detail in Ch. XIV *infra*.

[2] Ins. No. 2.

[3] Ins. No. 16.

[4] *IB*. 85, 94, 101, 109, 121, 133, 143.

[5] *Ibid.* 161.

[6] *Ibid.* 46.

of Vishṇu images of the Pāla and Sena periods discovered in various parts of Bengal corroborate the evidence of the inscriptions.[1]

For want of sufficient materials it is difficult to define the nature of early Vaishṇavism in Bengal. It is not necessary to attach any great importance to the false Vāsudeva, the king of the Puṇḍras, mentioned in the *Mahābhārata* (III. 14. 8), for it does not speak of him as preaching any new religion in the country of the Puṇḍras.[2]

Coming to more positive evidence of the inscriptions we find six special forms of Vishṇu, *viz.*, Govindasvāmin, Śveta-Varāhasvāmin, Kokāmukhasvāmin, Pradyumneśvara, Ananta-Nārāyaṇa and Nanna-Nārāyaṇa.[3] These names however do not suggest any speciality in their cults. Nor is there any trace of the *Chaturvyūha-vāda* in the Vaishṇavite inscriptions of Bengal which would betray the influence of the Pāñcharātra system. The name Pradyumneśvara, we have seen, was given to a totally different god, Harihara, and Pradyumna there has nothing to do with the Pradyumna of the *Chaturvyūha.*

The Bhāgavatism, whatever connection it might have had with the Pāñcharātra at the beginning, was completely different from it in the Gupta period.[4] The *vyūha-vāda* which was the central idea in the Pāñcharātra is absent from the Bhāgavatism of the Guptas which appears as a syncretism of various Vaishṇavite beliefs which had come to stay in the country. Vishṇu of Vedic Brahmanism, Nārāyaṇa of the Pāñcharātras, Kṛishṇa-Vāsudeva of the Sātvants, Gopāla of a pastoral people *etc.*, all had been put in the melting pot from which originated the Bhāgavatism of the Gupta period. It is

[1] Cf. Part II (*Iconography*) of this chapter. [2] *Supra* p. 38.

[3] Govindasvāmī is evidently formed by the addition of the word *svāmī* to the name Govinda. There are similar examples in Gupta inscriptions. Cf. *Chitrakūṭasvāmin* (a name of Vishṇu), *CII.* III. 268; *Svāmi-Mahāsena* (name of Kārtikeya), *ibid.* pp. 43, 44; *Svāmi-Mahābhairava* (name of Śiva), *ibid.* pp. 241, 248. *Nanna-Nārāyaṇa* was probably a name given to the god either according to the name of the locality or the name of the founder. For similar names, Cf. Chaṅgu-Nārāyaṇa, Ichaṅgu-, Chayaju-, Śesha-Nārāyaṇa *etc.* (Lévi-*Nepal*, I. 366).

[4] This has not been quite clearly recognised by many writers. Thus, for example, Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri (*Early History of the Vaishṇava Sect,*[2] p. 176) thinks that *vyūhavāda* disappears with the rise of the worship of Avatāras. The ideological basis of the *vyūha-vāda* is completely different from that of the *avatāra-vāda,* and the growth of the latter had nothing to do with the disappearance of the former. The Pāñcharātra, with its *vyūhavāda,* did not merge into the Bhāgavatism, but lived long as a distinct form of religion. Even the Gauḍīya Vaishṇavas did not confuse *vyūhavāda* with the *avatāravāda* (Cf. *Chaitanya-charitāmṛita,* Ādi, Ch. 5).

this Vaishṇavism which had found its way to Bengal in the Gupta period and had been firmly established in the Pāla period.[1]

Vaishṇavism in Bengal probably made a contribution to the systematisation of the theory of Avatāra. It is true that some of the Avatāras like Varāha, Vāmana, *etc*., are mentioned in the inscriptions of the Gupta period.[2] It is also true that in the *Mahābhārata* and in some of the Purāṇas a number of Avatāras is mentioned, but an attempt at systematisation is first met with in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* where there are three lists of *avatāras* of twenty-two, twenty-three and sixteen respectively.[3] In the inscriptions of the Pāla period we come across names of several *avatāras* like Varāha, Narasiṁha, Vāmana and Paraśurāma. But it is Jayadeva, of the court of Lakshmaṇasena, who gives a list of ten *avatāras*: Matsya, Kūrma, Varāha, Narasiṁha, Vāmana, Paraśurāma, Rāma, Balarāma, Buddha, and Kalkin.[4] This has since been the standard list of *avatāras* and has been widely accepted.

Another special feature of Bengal Vaishṇavism is the Rādhā-Kṛishṇa cult. It was well established in the time of Jayadeva (end of the 12th century), but it is not known how early it was started. It is highly improbable, as we have already seen, that the amorous scenes at Pāhārpur contain a representation of Rādhā.[5] The reference to Rādhā in a verse of the *Saptaśatī* of Hāla is of an uncertain date.[6] Even in the Belāva CP. of the 12th century, although there is mention of the amorous acts of Kṛishṇa with hundred

[1] Mention ought to be made of the theory of Mr. R. P. Chanda that the Pāñcharātra developed in the outlying provinces (of which Bengal is one) as it contains un-Vedic elements. In order to establish the un-Vedic character of the system, he depends firstly on the tradition that the Pāñcharātra was a kind of Tantra (*Pāñcharātraṁ bhāgavataṁ tantraṁ*), and secondly, on the denunciation of the system by Kumārila as un-Vedic (*Indo-Aryan Races*, pp. 99 ff). There is no doubt that the *Pāñcharātra* was a kind of Tantra, but Kumārila denounces it along with *Sāṁkhya*, *Yoga*, and *Pāśupata* simply because they had developed traditions which were widely separated from those of the Mīmāṁsā.

[2] H. C. Raychaudhuri, *op. cit.* p. 174-75.

[3] R. G. Bhandarkar, *op. cit.* p. 42.

[4] The *Mahābhārata* and the *Vāyu Purāṇa* contain the same list by the side of earlier ones. Sir R. G. Bhandarkar is, however, of opinion that the verses which contain this list must have been interpolated later when the number had come to be fixed at ten (*op. cit.* p. 42). Two of the ten *avatāras* are borrowed from the Buddhists. These are Buddha and Kalkin.

[5] Mr. S. K. Saraswati (*Sculpture*. 44 ff.) gives good grounds for not accepting the identification of the group at Pāhārpur with Rādhā-Kṛishṇa. He suggests identification either with Kṛishṇa-Rukmiṇī or with Kṛishṇa-Satyabhāmā, on the basis of certain passages in *Vishṇu-dharmottara* and *Bṛihat-saṁhitā*.

[6] For references to Rādhā in literature see Dr. Sukumar Sen, *A History of Brajabuli Literature*, pp. 11 ff.

Gopīs, there is no reference to Rādhā.[1] Rādhā was probably a Bengali innovation made shortly before the time of Jayadeva and represented only a Vaishṇavite phase of the growing Śāktism, Kṛishṇa, like Śiva, being the Supreme Reality, and Rādhā being the Śakti which alone could make it attainable.[2]

4. *Śaivism*

No great importance need be attached to the theory that Śaivism originated in Eastern India among the Vrātyas or outcastes who did not conform to the rules of orthodox Vedic religion. This theory is based on a questionable interpretation of the Vrātya hymn of the *Atharvaveda* (xv. 2), in which Mahādeva (also called Bhava, Īśāna, Sarva) is not only represented as the protector of the Vrātyas, but is also identified with the Vrātya. But it should not be forgotten that this Vrātya roams not only in the Eastern but also in all other directions. It is, however, not impossible that the Vrātya hymn records a particular religious practice in which Yoga plays the most important part, but its origin had nothing specially eastern. As a matter of fact, the worship of Śiva is now traced by some scholars to pre-historic period in the Indus Valley civilisation.[3]

Śaivism, as represented in the inscriptions of the Guptas, is a fully developed religion which had combined in itself the various cults of Rudra, Śiva and the phallus (both in its cruder and more developed *mukhaliṅga* forms). The Purāṇic mythology represents the God in a colourful way, and he is invoked under various names which probably had significance in earlier times, but represented only the various aspects of the same god. We have definite evidence of the installation of the god and his phallus symbol in different places

[1] *IB.* 19. The legend of Kṛishṇa's amorous acts with the Gopīs is found in the Brahma-, Vishṇu-, and Bhāgavata-*Purāṇas,* and also in Bhāsa's *Bālacharita.* See Sen, *op. cit.*

[2] The idea was already popular in the 6th and 7th centuries A.D. that the earth is Vaishṇavī or a Śakti of Vishṇu. (*CII.* III. 195, 200, 299). Mr. B. K. Goswami Śāstrī (*The Bhakti Cult in Ancient India,* pp. 106 ff) contends that the word Rādhā is old and may be traced to the Vedas where it occurs as an epithet of *irā* "plenty, wealth." But it came to symbolise the Śakti of Vishṇu only when a realistic creed had been fully developed by the Bhāgavatas.

[3] Marshall, *Mohenjo-Daro and the Indus Civilization,* I. 52 ff.

of Northern India in the Gupta period.[1] Bengal was surely not outside the pale of the influence of this growing faith. We learn from an inscription, found at Dāmodarpur, that before the end of the 5th century A.D., Śiva was worshipped in *liṅga* form even in the most inaccessible parts of Northern Bengal.[2] The cult had also secured royal patronage in Eastern Bengal, for the Gunaighar Grant (506 A.D.) represents *Mahārāja* Vainyagupta (*supra* p. 49) as *Mahādeva-pādānudhyāta.*

Two kings of Eastern India, Śaśāṅka of Karṇasuvarṇa and Bhāskaravarman of Kāmarūpa, both of whom lived in the first part of the 7th century, were great protagonists of the Śaiva religion.[3] The sculptures at Pāhārpur bear evidence of the popularity of the Śivaite cult, as there are several images of Śiva both of earlier and later periods.

The Pāla and Sena inscriptions also contain reference to the worship of Śiva. There is mention of the installation of a four-faced image of Mahādeva (probably a *mukhaliṅga*) during the reign of Dharmapāla. In the Bhāgalpur Plate of Nārāyaṇapāla there is record of a gift made by the king to the Śiva-bhaṭṭāraka and his worshippers, the Pāśupatas.[4] Vijayasena invokes Śiva under the name Śaṁbhu and Vallālasena, under the name of Dhūrjaṭī and Ardhanārīśvara.[5] Although Lakshmaṇasena and his successors begin their inscriptions by invoking Nārāyaṇa, they do not forget to pay their homage to Sadāśiva, the family deity.

As is evident from the Bhāgalpur Grant of Nārāyaṇapāla, Śaivism in Bengal was of the Pāśupata sect. The Pāśupata doctrines were first preached, according to a tradition recorded in the *Mahābhārata,* by Śiva-Śrīkaṇṭha. Bhandarkar has suggested that this Śrīkaṇṭha was probably a human teacher.[6] His view seems to be confirmed by a passage of the *Piṅgalāmata*[7] which says that Bhagavān Śrīkaṇṭhanātha was the author of that work. Lākulīśa was probably his disciple, and these two were responsible for the foundation of the Pāśupata religion. Lākulīśa had four disciples, Kuśika, Garga, Maitrī and Kaurushya; and they lived about ten

[1] *Cf.* The Mathura Pillar Ins. of Chandragupta II, G.E. 61 (*EI.* XXI. 4), where there is mention of the establishment of two images called Kapileśvara and Upamiteśvara (most probably *liṅgas*).

[2] Dāmodarpur CP. No. 4 (*EI.* XV. 140; *IC.* V. 432-33).

[3] For Śaśāṅka see *supra* p. 67. The Nidhanpur grant of Bhāskaravarman begins with an invocation to Śiva (*Kam. Sas.* 1 ff.).

[4] Nos. 2, 14.

[5] *IB.* 46, 61, 71, 85, 95, 101, 109, 116, 121, 133.

[6] R. G. Bhandarkar, *Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism etc.* p. 116.

[7] *Tantras.* 106.

generations before the time of Chandragupta II of the Gupta dynasty. This would place Lākulīśa almost in the time of Patañjali who for the first time speaks of the Śiva-bhāgavatas. In fact Patañjali is looked upon by the Śiva worshippers of Indonesia along with the four disciples of Lākulīśa as five *devatās*.[1]

The Pāśupata was thus the oldest form of Śaivism prevalent in North India, and fully represented what we call the Āgamānta Śaivism. The Āgamas were originally eighteen in number, and they had come into existence without doubt in the Gupta period.[2] A slightly later phase of the canonical literature of the school is represented by the eight Yāmalas and a very important work called *Piṅgalāmata*, a sort of appendix to the *Brahma-yāmala*. There is evidence to prove that these texts declare Āryāvarta (the country to the south of the Himālaya, to the north of the Vindhya, to the east of Pañchāla and to the west of Magadha) as the fittest place for Śiva-sādhanā, yet it really excludes, as unfit, Kāmarūpa, Kośala, Kāśmīra, Kaliṅga, Kaṅkaṇa, Kāñchī and Kāverī-rāshṭra. The people of Gauḍa are admitted, but the *gurus* of that country are considered to be inferior to the *gurus* of Āryāvarta. This bar, however, was not quite effective, as competent teachers from Mid-India were migrating to the outlying provinces to propagate the religion of the Pāśupatas.

A close examination of the Āgamas does not lend any weight to the view that Śāktism originated in the outlying provinces.[3]

[1] *Cf.* Mathurā Pillar Ins. of Chandragupta II. (*EI.* XXI. 1 ff). The editor, Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar, has suggested that Lākulīśa, on the basis of this calculation (25 years to each generation), belonged to the 1st century A.D. The close association of Patañjali with the four disciples of Lākulīśa suggests that the latter might have flourished about the same period. For the references to five *devatās*, see Kern, *Verspreide Geschriften*, VI. 308.

[2] *Tantras*. 4 ff.

[3] Mr. R. P. Chanda (*Indo-Aryan Races*, pp. 122 ff.) is responsible for the theory that Śāktism originated in the outer Aryan belt (Bengal, North Bihar, Gujarat, *etc.*). He is of opinion (p. 153) that conception of Śakti arose in a society where matriarchate or motherkin was prevalent. The anthropologists can say how far he has succeeded in establishing the existence of a substratum of matriarchate in the social organisation of the outer Indo-Aryan belt. The history of Śāktism, however, does not lend any support to his theory. There is no difficulty in admitting that there were mountain goddesses like Vindhyavāsinī, vegetation deities like Śākambharī *etc.*, but these did not give rise to Śāktism. The basis of Śāktism was a well established system of philosophy like the Sāṁkhya in which Prakṛiti and Purusha play the same rôle as that of the Śakti and Śiva. Once this philosophy was accepted, the affiliation of various local or tribal goddesses to Prakṛiti became a matter of course. Mr. Chanda, (*op. cit.*) quotes a verse of unknown origin according to which the Śakti cult "was revealed in Gauḍa, popularised by the Maithilas, here and there prevails in Mahārāshṭra and has

Śāktism might have developed certain special features in contact with the local culture, but its origin can be traced directly from the orthodox Śaiva canon which has been already referred to. Thus at the beginning of the *Brahma-yāmala,* it is said:

"The supreme energy of the ultimate being, the Śiva, assumed the form of desire (*ichchhā*). The *bindu* was energised by this desire and from it pure spiritual knowledge emanated. Sadāśiva represents this knowledge in its plenitude and from him the creation starts."[1]

The *Jayadratha-yāmala*[2] gives the details of the *sādhanā* of a large number of aspects of Kālī like Īśānakālī, Rakshākālī, Vīrya-kālī, Prajñākālī, Saptārṇakālī *etc.* Chakreśvarī, Ghoratārā, Yoginī-chakra *etc.* also occur in the same text and, as we have already seen, this was one of those texts which originated in Mid-India.

It seems probable that these orthodox traditions of Śāktism were prevalent in Bengal in the later Gupta and the Pāla periods.[3] These traditions were largely elaborated in the innumerable Tantras that were written in subsequent times, and Bengal had a large share in it. None of these Tantras, however, seems to be older than the twelfth century. There are no definite traces of Śāktism in the inscriptions of the Pālas and Senas. There is perhaps a veiled reference to a definite Tāntric divinity, *viz.,* Mahānīla-Sarasvatī[4] in an inscription of Nayapāla found at Gayā (No. 37). The paucity of reference to Tāntric mysticism in inscriptions need not surprise us, as Tāntrism represents a particular phase of personal religion. It had thus no connection with any public religious establishment. It had this important difference with the Āgamānta Śaivism which required institutions, community of votaries and pious gifts for the maintenance of those establishments.

5. *Other Sects*

A survey of Brahmanism would remain incomplete without a reference to other Purāṇic or pseudo-Purāṇic gods and goddessses

disappeared in Gujarat." I do not believe, for reasons already stated, that Śāktism originated in Bengal. The Kaula form of Śāktism had been developed and preserved much more in Bengal than elsewhere, but I have tried to show later that it was derived from Buddhist mysticism of which Bengal was the last stronghold.

[1] *Tantras.* 102. [2] *Ibid.* 112 ff.

[3] According to the *Devī Purāṇa,* composed about the end of the seventh or the beginning of the eighth century A.D. (*NIA.* v. 2 ff.), the Devī was worshipped in her different forms, after the manner of the Left-hand Śāktas (*vāmāchāreṇa*) in different places in Rāḍhā, Varendra, Kāmarūpa, Kāmākhyā, Bhoṭṭadeśa, *etc.* (39. 14-15; 42. 9).

[4] The actual expression is '*uru-nīla-padma.*'

whose sculptural representations are found in Bengal. We get images of such gods as Kārtikeya, Gaṇeśa, Indra, Agni, Kuvera, Brihaspati *etc.* in Bengal[1] from the 6th century onwards, but we have no detailed knowledge of their cults. Gaṇeśa was the object of separate worship in other parts of India, but there is no evidence to prove the existence of the Gāṇapatyas in Bengal. Kārtikeya, a popular deity in modern Bengal, seems to have attained popularity in India since the Kushān times, and was a favourite deity with some of the Gupta emperors. According to *Rājataraṅginī* (IV. 420 ff), there was a temple of Kārtikeya at Puṇḍravardhana in the 8th century A.D., and this presupposes his worship in early times. Among the goddesses there are representations of Gaṅgā and Yamunā, and the images of the Mātṛikās are also met with. But they do not seem to have any special cult although the worship of Gaṅgā is still current in Bengal in the folk religion.

Two other gods, Sūrya and his son Revanta, however, enjoyed a special favour in ancient Bengal. The Sūrya of the Sun-worshippers, as is well known, had nothing to do with the Vedic solar deity of that name, and was most probably a Scythic importation to India.[2] The oldest image of Sūrya from North Bengal is that from Niyāmatpur[3] which has strong affinities with the art of the Kushān period. Although it is not improbable that the sun-worship had been first introduced in the Kushān period, no positive evidence of the dedication of any temple to the Sun is available before the Gupta period.[4] References to the worship of the god in the inscriptions of the 5th, 6th and 7th centuries A.D., are numerous[5] and it is probable that the influence of the cult had extended to Bengal very early in the Gupta period. The number of images of the Sun-god, dating from the Pāla and Sena periods, is very large.

But the Sun-god, probably like the people that brought him to India, was ultimately assimilated into the Brahmanical religion without losing its special features. Keśavasena and his brother adore the Sun who is described as "the friend of lotus beds, the source of deliverance of the three worlds withheld in the prison of

[1] These have been dealt with in Part II of this chapter.

[2] R. G. Bhandarkar, *op. cit.* pp. 153 ff; J. N. Banerjea, "The Representation of Sūrya in Brahmanical Art" (*IA.* 1925, pp. 161, 171); J. Przyluski, "Un dieu iranien dans l'Inde" (*Rocznik Orjentalistyczny*, VII. 1-9).

[3] See *infra* p. 455-56.

[4] R. G. Bhandarkar, *op. cit.* 154.

[5] *CII.* III. 28n, 71, 218.

darkness, and the wonderful bird of the tree of the Vedas."[1] The Sun-god had by this time lost his identity in the Brahmanical solar deity. But kings Viśvarūpasena and Keśavasena call themselves *Parama-saura*, indicating the existence of a separate sect of Sun-worshippers.[2]

We possess a number of images of Revanta, who is described in some of the Purāṇas as the son of the Sun-god begotten on Sureṇu. Although an elaborate description of the worship of the god is given in the *Agni Purāṇa*, he does not seem to have had any popularity in the orthodox Brahmanical circle, and belonged to the folk-religion, his cult being an adjunct of the sun-worship.

III. JAINISM

Jainism, like Buddhism, originated in Eastern India, as Mahāvīra was born in the neighbourhood of Vaiśālī and passed a part of his religious career in Magadha and Champā. Pārśva, the immediate predecessor of Mahāvīra in the lineage of Tīrthaṅkaras, is associated with Champā, and in fact the most important Jaina locality connected with the memory of Pārśva, the Pareshnāth Hill, is in Eastern India.

According to traditions recorded in Jaina literature, Mahāvīra personally visited Western Bengal, but was not favourably received (*v. supra* p. 36). There is no evidence to show that he ever crossed the Ganges and went eastward to the country of the Puṇḍras, although there are frequent references to Vaṅga in the Jaina canon.[3]

The earlier name of Jainism was Nirgrantha, and it was by this name that the Jaina community was known till the Gupta period. According to tradition recorded in the *Divyāvadāna*, the Nirgrantha religion was established in Puṇḍravardhana in the time of Aśoka.[4] It is said that the Nirgranthas in Puṇḍravardhana had drawn pictures representing Buddha as falling to the feet of the Nirgrantha. The news was carried to Aśoka who, being enraged, ordered a wholesale massacre of the *Nirgranthaputras* in the city of Pāṭaliputra. It is difficult to put much faith in this story.

[1] *IB*. 126.
[2] *Ibid*. 145.
[3] See Lévi, *Pre-Aryan and Pre-Dravidian in India* (Eng. translation by P. C. Bagchi), pp. 73 ff.
[4] *Divyāvadāna* (ed. Cowell and Neil), XXVIII, *Vītaśokāvadāna*, p. 427; the names of the Nirgranthas and Ājīvikas are mixed up, but in the Chinese translation, the name of Nirgrantha is given all through; Cf. Przyluski, *La legende de l'Empereur Aśoka*, p. 278.

Fortunately we have another set of Jaina traditions which show that North Bengal and a portion of lower Bengal had contributed to the establishment of the Jaina religion already before the second century B.C. The *Kalpasūtra*[1] is said to have been compiled by Bhadrabāhu who was contemporaneous with Chandragupta Maurya. Although this attribution may be disputed, there is no doubt that the work contains very old traditions. It is certain that there was a split in the Jaina church after Bhadrabāhu, and this led to the foundation of a number of schools all having a general affiliation to the main church. According to this tradition,[2] Godāsa, a disciple of Bhadrabāhu, was responsible for the foundation of a school called Godāsa-gaṇa which had in course of time four *śākhās,* three of which are called Tāmraliptika, Koṭīvarshīya and Puṇḍravardhanīya. These refer to three well known places in Bengal, the first in lower Bengal and the last two in North Bengal.[3] Inscriptions of the end of the first century B.C. and of the first century A.D.[4] contain a large number of names of the schools mentioned in the *Kalpasūtra,* and thus show that the tradition had been well established in that period. A Mathurā inscription, probably belonging to the 2nd century A.D., records the erection of a Jaina image at the request of a Jaina monk who was an inhabitant of Rārā, a name that can be easily equated with Rāḍhā.[5]

In a number of inscriptions[6] of the Gupta period we hear of erection of images of Pārśva and other Tīrthaṅkaras, but none of them belongs to Bengal. The solitary exception is the recently discovered Pāhārpur copper-plate of the year 159 (478-79 A.D.). It testifies to the existence of a Jaina *vihāra* at Vaṭa-Gohālī "which was presided over by the disciples and the disciples of disciples of the Nirgranthanātha *āchārya* Guhanandin belonging to the Pañcha-stūpa section of Benares."[7] The *vihāra* which was thus probably established in the 4th century A.D., if not earlier still, occupied the site of the Great Temple and Monastery recently unearthed at Pāhārpur.

It appears from the statement of Hiuen Tsang that the Nirgranthas formed a dominant religious sect in Northern, Southern,

[1] Wint.-*Lit.* II. 462; the *Kalpasūtra* is the 8th section of the *Āyāradasāo.*

[2] *Jaina Sūtras* (translation of Jacobi), *SBE.* XXII. 288.

[3] The fourth *śākhā,* called *Dāsi-Kharvaṭika,* may be associated with Kharvaṭa in West Bengal.

[4] Guérinot, *Epigraphic Jaina,* pp. 36 ff, 71 ff.

[5] *PB.* 72.

[6] *CII.* III. 68, 259.

[7] *EI.* XX. 59 ff.

and Eastern Bengal in the 7th century A.D. Referring to the heretics in Puṇḍravardhana and Samataṭa the pilgrim observes that "the Digambara Nirgranthas were very numerous."[1]

The Nirgranthas, however, seem to have almost disappeared from Bengal in the subsequent period, and the numerous inscriptions of the Pālas and the Senas contain no reference to them. It is only the immigrants from Western India who re-established the old religion in its new form, henceforth called Jainism, in different parts of North Bengal in the Muhammadan period.[2] The naked Nirgrantha ascetics had in the meantime probably merged in such religious communities as that of the Avadhūtas which had been well established in Bengal towards the end of the Pāla period.[3]

IV. BUDDHISM

There is no definite evidence as to the time when Buddhism first gained influence in Bengal. The *Vinaya-piṭaka,* which defines the limits of Āryāvarta for the purpose of ordination, places its eastern frontier at Kajaṅgala near Rajmahal. In the corresponding passage in the Sanskrit *Vinaya,* the eastern limit is stated to be the kingdom of Puṇḍravardhana.[4] As Vinaya texts are generally believed to have preserved traditions of pre-Aśokan days, these passages may be taken to indicate that Buddhism had probably

[1] Watters, II. 184, 187. Beal's translation (*Records.* II. 195, 199) as "the most numerous" is not exact. Watters' translation, quoted in the text, gives the sense of the original which literally means "really numerous".

[2] In fact, we do not get Jaina inscriptions in Northern India before the 11th century A.D.; the oldest inscription at Abu is dated 1031 A.D. (Guérinot, *op. cit.* p. 24). P. C. Nahar in his *Jaina Inscriptions* (I. 1) describes an inscription on the back of an image of Pārśvanātha found at Ajimganj (Murshidabad district, Bengal) which is dated *Saṁ.* 1110. The reading of the date is, however, doubtful and there is no estampage to check it; and in Nahar's list there is no other inscription discovered in Bengal which is earlier than the 15th century A.D.

[3] The Ājīvika sect, as is well known, was an important religious organisation of early times. It had may points of similarity in matters of doctrine with the Nirgranthas. Aśoka attaches great importance to them by mentioning them along with the Nirgranthas in Pillar Edict VII, and also by dedicating caves to them in the Barabar Hills. In the *Divyāvadāna* (XXVIII) the names of the Ājīvikas and Nirgranthas alternate in an indiscriminate way. It is, therefore, not impossible that the Ājīvika sect had, by the time of Hiuen Tsang, merged into the community of the Nirgranthas who were then numerous in Bengal. In any case, there is no evidence to prove the separate existence of the Ājīvikas in Bengal.

[4] For a complete discussion of the texts on this point see Pelliot, *BEFEO.* IV. 379 ff.

obtained a footing in North Bengal even before Aśoka's time. The great missionary activity of Aśoka, and the traditions about him recorded in *Divyāvadāna*, and also by Hiuen Tsang, make it highly probable that Buddhism was not unknown in Bengal during the reign of that great emperor.[1] The existence of Buddhism in North Bengal in the 2nd century B.C. may also be inferred from two votive inscriptions at Sāñchī recording the gifts of two inhabitants of Puñavaḍhana, which undoubtedly stands for Puṇḍravardhana.[2] It must be noted, however, that Bengal is not included in the various centres of Theravāda Buddhism in India from which, according to *Mahāvaṁsa*, the leading Theras went over to Ceylon to attend the ceremony of consecration of the *Mahāstūpa* erected by king Duṭṭhagāmaṇi in the first century B.C.[3] The first definite reference to Vaṅga as an important centre of Buddhism occurs in a Nāgārjunikoṇḍa inscription which may be dated in the 2nd or 3rd century A.D.[4] It includes Vaṅga in a long list of well-known countries which were converted to Buddhism by the masters and fraternities of Ceylonese monks.

Paucity of archaeological evidence from Bengal proper makes it difficult to say anything on the condition of Buddhism in Bengal during the early centuries of the Christian era. But the flourishing state of Buddhism in Bengal at the beginning of the Gupta period presupposes that the religion had been prospering in different cities of Bengal during the early period.

Fa-hien was in India at the beginning of the 5th century A.D. The pilgrim did not cross the Ganges to see North Bengal, but as he descended eastwards along the course of the Ganges, he found on the southern bank of the river the great kingdom of Champā, with *stūpas* reared at the places associated with the memory of the Gautama Buddha and his predecessors, and monks residing at all

[1] Dr. Bhandarkar's suggestion (*Aśoka*,[2] p. 37) that *Pali(de)shu* of Rock Edict XIV is *Pāriṁda* (and not *Pulinda*) which he identifies with Varendrī, is of no great value. Varendrī does not occur in early records and we have Puṇḍra in Sānchi inss., *Divyāvadāna*, *etc*. As North Bengal probably formed an integral part of Aśokan empire there was no need of its separate mention. For the passage in *Divyāvadāna* see *supra* p. 409. For references by Hiuen Tsang, see Watters, II. 185, 187, 190, 191.

[2] *EI*. II. 108, 380, Nos. 102, 217. There is no doubt that Puṇyavardhana is only another name of Puṇḍravardhana (cf. Watters, II. 185). It must be remembered, however, that donors of gifts to a Buddhist *stūpa* need not necessarily be Buddhists. The Pāhārpur CP., for example, records gifts to a Jaina *vihāra* by a Brāhmaṇa and his wife (*EI*. XX. 60).

[3] Geiger, *Mahāvaṁsa*, pp. 193-94. The list, however, contains much that is fanciful.

[4] *EI*. XX. 23.

these localities. In Tāmralipti there were in his times twenty-two monasteries, all of which were inhabited by monks, and the law of Buddha was flourishing.[1] Fa-hien stayed at Tāmralipti for two years "writing out his *sūtras*, and drawing pictures of images."

The information supplied by Fa-hien is amply corroborated by the archaeological evidence of the Gupta period. The Gunaighar[2] Grant bearing the date 188 of the Gupta Era (506 or 507 A.D.), of the reign of Vainyagupta, records grants of land in favour of the Buddhist *Avaivarttika Saṅgha*[3] of the Mahāyāna sect. The Saṅgha, founded by one Āchārya Śāntideva, was residing in a monastery called *Āśrama-vihāra*, which was dedicated to Ārya-Avalokiteśvara, and had been established by one Rudradatta. The plate also refers to two other Buddhist *vihāras* in the neighbourhood, one of them being styled '*Rāja-vihāra*' or royal *vihāra*. The record clearly shows that Buddhism had been firmly established, even in the remote south-eastern corner of Bengal, already by the beginning of the 6th century A.D.

A number of Chinese records of the 7th century contain information on the condition of Buddhism in Bengal. Amongst all these records the account of Hiuen Tsang is, of course, the most important.[4] He saw with his own eyes almost all the chief centres of Buddhism which existed in his time in Bengal. At Kajaṅgala (Kankjol) near Rajmahal he saw six or seven Buddhist monasteries which contained over three hundred brethren; and

"in the northern part of the country, not far from the Ganges, was a lofty belvedere built of stone and brick; its base was broad and high, and its artistic ornamentation was exquisite; on each of its sides were carved images of holy beings, the Buddhas and the *devas* being made different in appearance."

At Puṇḍravardhana there were twenty Buddhist monasteries and above 3000 brethren who followed the Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna. The biggest establishment, about three miles to the west of the capital-city of Puṇḍravardhana, was the magnificent *Po-shi-po*[5] monastery "which had spacious halls and tall storeyed chambers." There were in this establishment over 700 brethren and many distinguished monks of Eastern India. Not far from this place there

[1] *Fa-hien*. 100. [2] *IHQ*. VI. 55 ff.

[3] For the correct name and its meaning cf. *IHQ*. VI. 572.

[4] Watters, II. 182-193. Beal-*Records*, II. 193-204.

[5] The name of this monastery is spelt in three different ways in the sources: *Po-shi-p'o*, *Po-ki-p'o* and *Po-ki-sha* (Watters, II. 184). Cunningham accepted the first reading and identified it with a site called Bhāsu-vihāra near Mahāsthān (*IC*. I. 228).

was a temple with an image of Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara which was visited by people from far and near.

The condition of Buddhism in Samataṭa, Karṇasuvarṇa and Tāmralipti was not less flourishing. In Samataṭa there were more than thirty Buddhist monasteries with above 2000 brethren of the Sthavira school; in Karṇasuvarṇa, more than ten monasteries with above 2000 brethren of the Sammatīya school; and in Tāmralipti, more than ten monasteries with above 1000 brethren. Near the capital of Karṇasuvarṇa the pilgrim saw the *Lo-to-mo-chi* (Raktamṛittikā ?) monastery, which was a magnificent and famous establishment, and a resort of illustrious brethren. According to tradition recorded by the pilgrim, the monastery had been erected by a king of the country, before the entire country was converted to Buddhism, to honour a Buddhist *śramaṇa* from South India.

So far as Tāmralipti is concerned, we have more corroborative evidence of the same period from other Chinese records. Ta Ch'eng-teng stayed at Tāmralipti for twelve years and acquired an extensive knowledge of Sanskrit Buddhist texts. It was he who, on his return to China, explained the *Nidānaśāstra* of Ullaṅga (Nj. 1227). Tao-lin stayed there for three years, learnt Sanskrit and got himself initiated to the Sarvāstivāda School.[1]

I-tsing[2] came to Tāmralipti in 673 A.D. and met Ta Ch'eng-teng there in a *vihāra* called *Po-lo-ho* (Varāha ?) ; he stayed there for some time, learnt Sanskrit and the Śabdavidyā, and translated at least one Sanskrit text into Chinese, the *Nāgārjuna-bodhisattva-suhṛillekha.*[3]

Sheng-Chi (*v. supra* p. 87), who was in India about the time of I-tsing, has recorded a valuable piece of evidence on the condition of Buddhism in Samataṭa. The king of the country at this time was Rājabhaṭa, who was a fervent worshipper of the *triratna* and played the part of a great Upāsaka. He used to make every day hundred thousand statues of Buddha with earth, and read hundred thousand *ślokas* of the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra.* He also used to take out processions in honour of Buddha, with an image of Avalokiteśvara at the front, and make pious gifts. In the city there were more than 4000 monks and nuns in his time.[4] It has been suggested above (*v. supra* p. 87) that Rājabhaṭa belonged to the Khaḍga dynasty. Even if this be not true, it is important to note that a line of Buddhist kings, belonging to this dynasty, ruled in

[1] Chavannes, *Religieux Eminents,* 94.
[2] Takakusu-*I-tsing.* xxx, Ch. x.
[3] Bagchi, *Le Canon Bouddhique en Chine,* II. 539.
[4] Chavannes, *op. cit.* 128.

East Bengal towards the close of the 7th century A.D. It is clear from all these that Buddhism was in a very flourishing condition in Bengal in the seventh century A.D.

The great monastery of Nālandā probably came into prominence towards the close of the fifth century A.D. Although situated in Magadha, it was not isolated from the religious life of Bengal. The Buddhist scholars and kings of Bengal in the 6th and 7th centuries A.D., as in later times, largely contributed to the development of that institution. The great Śīlabhadra, who was the abbot of Nālandā when Hiuen Tsang went there, was a scion of the Brahmanical royal family of Samataṭa. After travelling in various parts of India, he settled down in Nālandā and studied under Dharmapāla. He soon "rose to be eminent for his profound comprehension of the principles and subtleties of Buddhism and his fame extended to foreign countries."[1] As Śīlabhadra was the teacher of Hiuen Tsang at Nālandā, the latter's information about his teacher may be relied upon. We have, besides, seen from the account of Sheng-Chi that the royal family of Samataṭa was specially devoted to Buddhism.

It will not be out of place to mention here that the two schismatic sects of the Buddhists, *viz.*, the Chhavaggiyas (*lit.* the Band of Six Men) and the followers of Devadatta, had probably their establishments in Bengal. According to the interpretation of the Mahāsthān inscription by Dr. B. M. Barua[2] the former community was settled in Puṇḍranagara as early as the Maurya period. As regards the latter, Hiuen Tsang definitely states that there were three *saṅghārāmas* in Karṇasuvarṇa, 'in which they do not use thickened milk, following the directions of Devadatta.'[3]

As regards the schools of Buddhism, Hiuen Tsang tells us that in Puṇḍravardhana there were both Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna, in Karṇasuvarṇa the Sammatīya school, in Tāmralipti the Sarvāstivāda, and in Samataṭa the Mahāyāna. The Sammatīya school was a branch of the Sarvāstivāda. Although I-tsing tells us that all the four schools, *viz.*, the Mahāsāṅghika, Sthavira, Sarvāstivāda and Sammatīya, were found in Eastern India side by side with other schools, there is no further positive evidence about it. There is no doubt that the only form of Buddhism known in Samataṭa was Mahāyāna, which had been established there already in the beginning of the 6th century, as is proved by the Gunaighar inscription of the time of Vainyagupta.

In fact, the difference between Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna did not present itself to the Buddhist monks of those days in the same

[1] Watters, II. 109. [2] *IHQ.* X. 57 ff. [3] Beal-*Records.* II. 201.

way as it does now. Hiuen Tsang, while speaking of the Buddhists of Kaliṅga, says that there were 500 Brethren "students of Mahāyānist Sthavira school."[1] From an analysis of the ancient Vinaya texts it has appeared to Professor Przyluski[2] that there were Mahāyānists of the various Hīnayāna schools like Sarvāstivāda, Dharmaguptaka, Mahāsāṅghika, *etc.* The Chinese and Japanese Buddhists have always regarded the Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna as two complementary forms of the same old Buddhism, the first meant for the less advanced (Śrāvakas and Arhats), the latter for the more advanced (the Bodhisattvas). In many places of Sanskrit Buddhist texts we are told that the Śrāvakayāna (or Hīnayāna) is simply a lower step in the ladder leading to the higher which is the Mahāyāna.[3]

Reference has been made above (*supra* p. 67) to Hiuen Tsang's account of the persecution of Buddhism by Śaśāṅka which is difficult to regard as historical. In any case, the condition of Buddhism in Bengal and Bihar, as depicted by the pilgrim, does not allow us to believe that any serious persecution had taken place shortly before his time, and Buddhism in the very capital of Śaśāṅka in Karṇasuvarṇa was in a flourishing state.

As a matter of fact the religious life in India is marked about this time by a spirit of catholicity and mutual respect and understanding which is hardly compatible with a deliberate persecution on sectarian grounds. The barriers between the different religious sects were fast coming down, and Buddhism, as represented in the documents of the Pāla period, exhibits the new tendency of eclecticism such as we find so strikingly illustrated in the career of Harshavardhana. The Pāla rulers, although great devotees of Buddha, and promoters of the cause of Buddhism both in Bengal and in Bihar, were also patrons of Brahmanism.[4]

The Pāla kings call themselves *Parama-saugata,* and the Buddha is regularly invoked at the beginning of their official records. This invocation sums up the new ideology of Buddha and Bodhisattvas in the most developed Mahāyāna form. During the four centuries of their rule, Bengal and Bihar remained the last stronghold of Buddhism which gradually lost hold in India. But it was precisely during this period that Mahāyāna Buddhism, under the patronage of the Pālas, became a powerful international force, and exercised

[1] Watters, II. 198.
[2] Przyluski, *Le Concile de Rājagṛha,* p. 362.
[3] See P. C. Bagchi, *Bauddha Dharma O Sāhitya* (in Bengali), pp. 77 ff.
[4] This point has been further discussed *infra* pp. 426-27.

dominant influence from Tibet in the north to the islands of the Malay Archipelago in the south.[1]

Many instances of active patronage of Buddhism by various Pāla rulers have already been given in connection with their political history (*supra* Ch. VI), and reference has been made to the foundation of many important Buddhist monasteries (Odantapurī, Somapura and Vikramaśīla *vihāras*) by the early Pāla kings (*v. supra* p. 115). The famous monastery of Vikramaśīla[2] was situated on a hill on the south and right bank of the Ganges to the north of Magadha. The institution included 107 temples and six colleges, and outshone Nālandā by attracting a large number of Buddhist students from Tibet. In fact the list of Tibetan translations of Sanskrit texts prepared at Vikramaśīla is not insignificant.[3] The site of this famous monastery has been located at Pātharghātā in the Bhagalpur district,[4] but this is by no means certain. The monastery of Odantapurī which served as model for the great Bsam-ya monastery in Tibet,[5] was in the neighbourhood of Nālandā, and has been located near the modern town of Bihar.[6] The monastery of Somapura, which can be definitely located at Pāhārpur (*v. supra* p. 115), became an important centre of Buddhist learning.[7]

Amongst other famous *vihāras* of the Pāla period may be mentioned the Traikūṭaka, Devīkoṭa, Paṇḍita, Sannagara, Phullahari, Paṭṭikeraka, Vikramapurī and Jagaddala. The Traikūṭaka *vihāra* was the place where Haribhadra composed his famous commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* under the patronage of Dharmapāla.[8] It was situated probably somewhere in West Bengal as there is mention of a Traikūṭaka Devālaya being unearthed in the Rāḍhā country.[9] Devīkoṭa was in North Bengal (*v. supra* p. 25), and the Paṇḍita-*vihāra* in Chittagong.[10] Phullahari and its hermitage are frequently referred to as a place where several famous Buddhist Āchāryas lived, and Sanskrit texts were translated into Tibetan in collaboration with Tibetan scholars.[11] It was situated in western

[1] For a fuller discussion cf. Ch. XVII *infra*.
[2] Sumpa, lviii, lxxi, lxxv, lxxxvi.
[3] See Cordier-*Cat.* II. 113, 115, 175, 227, 370; III. 186.
[4] *JASB.* N. S. 1909, pp. 1-13; Sumpa, *op. cit.* lxxi.
[5] *JBTS.* I. 1-31.
[6] Sumpa, *op. cit.*
[7] Sumpa, *op. cit.* lxxx; The monastery was called *Śrī-Dharmapāladeva-mahāvihāra* (*Paharpur.* pp. 20, 90). An inscription (*EI.* XXI. 97 ff.) of the first half of the 12th century refers to the burning of the monastery of Somapura by an army of Vaṅgāla (*supra* p. 199, f.n. 2).
[8] *RC.*[1] 5; Sumpa, *op. cit.* xciv.
[9] Sumpa, *op. cit.* lxvi.
[10] *Ibid.* lxii, Cordier-*Cat.* II. p. 27.
[11] Sumpa, *op. cit.* lxviii; Cordier-*Cat.* I. 52; II. 102, 162.

Magadha probably somewhere near Monghyr. Sannagara in Eastern India is mentioned as an important seat of Buddhist learning, and a Buddhist scholar named Vanaratna, who was responsible for a large number of Tibetan translations, hailed from that place.[1] The site of Paṭṭikera has already been discussed above (*supra* p. 258). Vikramapurī was in Vikramapura in Dacca and flourished mostly under the patronage of the Chandras and Senas.[2] The Jagaddala Mahāvihāra, according to the *Rāmacharita* (III. 7), was in Varendrī.[3] A number of scholars, famous in Tibet, like Vibhūtichandra, Dānaśīla, Mokshākaragupta, and Śubhākaragupta, belonged to this monastery, and there is evidence of Tibetan translations of Sanskrit texts being actually prepared at Jagaddala. The presiding Buddhist deity at Jagaddala was Avalokiteśvara.[4]

These are only the famous institutions of the period whose names have been preserved in literature, but throughout eastern Magadha and Bengal, which had attained a sort of cultural and political unity, there were many other smaller institutions whose names have been lost.[5]

As noted above, some minor royal dynasties, ruling in Bengal during the Pāla period, were followers of Buddhism. Reference may be made in particular to Kāntideva and the Chandra kings (*v. supra* pp. 134-35). The Tibetan sources tell us that Tāntric Buddhism flourished in Vaṅgāla under the Chandras, and that king Gopīchandra, who is associated by tradition with a particular form of mysticism, belonged to this dynasty.[6] The famous Buddhist scholar of Vikramapura, Atīśa Dīpaṅkara, is said to have been born in the royal house of that place.[7] It is, therefore, not improbable that he was related to the Chandras.

The Sena kings do not seem to have had any special leaning towards Buddhism, and Buddhism does not seem to have had any patronage from them.[8] The Buddhist institutions soon disappeared for want of royal support, and those which lingered on did not appear to have long survived the invasion of Muhammad Bakhtyār.[9]

[1] Cordier-*Cat.* I. 78, 79, 121, 226, 303; II. 105, 116, 125.

[2] Sumpa, *op. cit.* II. *xviii.*

[3] It was not in Rāmāvatī, as H. P. Śāstrī held (*RC.*[2] XXXI).

[4] Cordier-*Cat.* I. 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 33, 40, 49, 50, 122, 142, 293, 302. 365; II. 78, 85, 227.

[5] For an account of the Buddhist *vihāras* of Bengal, Cf. *IC.* I. 227 ff.

[6] Sumpa, *op. cit.*

[7] *Ibid.* I. xviii; II. xviii.

[8] But cf. the case of Madhusena, *supra* p. 228.

[9] For definite evidence regarding the existence of Buddhism in Bengal after A.D. 1200, see *supra* pp. 228, 258. The Sābhār Ins. of Hariśchandra (*DR.* 1920-21, pp. 175 ff; D. C. Sen, *Bṛihat-Vaṅga*, I. 277) of the end of the 14th century A.D.,

Buddhism under the Pālas appears to have been completely different from the Buddhism which even Hiuen Tsang describes in the middle of the 7th century A.D. The ancient schools, like Sarvāstivāda, Sammatīya *etc.*, are no longer spoken of in Eastern India, and the trace of pure Mahāyāna that we discover in the invocations used by kings in their inscriptions does not give a correct picture of the Buddhism of the period. The Mahāyāna had developed forms of mysticism which are known as Vajrayāna and Tantrayāna, and these by their very nature dealt with certain deeper metaphysical problems which had greater attraction for the religious man.

The leaders of this new movement have been all celebrated in Buddhist tradition as Siddhas, and their number is traditionally reckoned as eighty-four. This number had, however, nothing but a symbolical value, as an examination of the eighty-four names shows that some of them are simply repetitions of the same names in different forms. But there is no doubt that many of the names were real, as we have works, mostly preserved in Tibetan translations, of some of the Siddhas.[1]

The rise of this mysticism was somehow connected with Bengal which played a great rôle in its dissemination throughout India. Although it is difficult to discuss the chronology of the Siddhas here,[2] we have strong reason to believe that they lived some time between the 10th and 12th centuries. From the number of works attributed to them, it appears that the principal amongst the Siddhas were Saraha, Nāgārjuna, Tillopāda, Nāro-pāda, Advayavajra and Kāhṇu-pāda. Writings of Lui-pāda, Śabara, Bhusuku, Kukkuri, *etc.*, also have been preserved. According to some Buddhist tradition Saraha was born in the city of Rājñī in Eastern India, and was a contemporary of king Ratnapāla. He was initiated to Tantric Buddhism by a king of Orissa, and later succeeded to a chair at Nālandā. Nāgārjuna is said to have been the disciple of Saraha and is sometimes supposed to be identical with Nāgabodhi. These two, however,

of which the authenticity is disputed, contains a Buddhist invocation and says that the ancestors of Hariśchandra were worshippers of the Daśabala Buddha. It is probable that small Buddhist communities still continued to exist in the 14th century in inaccessible corners of Eastern Bengal. It is also likely that Buddhism in various modified forms lingered in Bengal for many centuries. Cf. H. P. Śāstrī, *Discovery of Living Buddhism in Bengal* (1896) ; also an article entitled "Buddhists in Bengal" (*Jagannath Intermediate College Magazine*, Dacca, Vol. x, No. II, pp. 35 ff).

[1] See Bagchi, *Kaulajñāna-nirṇaya*, *Introd.* pp. 21-22.

[2] *Ibid.* pp. 27-28; also *supra* pp. 325 ff.

appear to be two distinct personages. The two met at Puṇḍravardhana, and it was there that Nāgārjuna formed a part of his mystic career. Nāgārjuna was initiated to Buddhist mysticism and alchemy at Nālandā by Saraha and his assistants. One of his disciples, Nāgahava, became a professor at Nālandā. Tillo-pāda was a Brahmin of Chittagong, associated with the Paṇḍita-*vihāra* of that place, and a contemporary of king Mahīpāla. Nāro-pāda belonged to Varendra, was a disciple of the famous logician of that country, Jetāri, and a contemporary of king Nayapāla (*c.* 1038-55 A.D.). The great Atīśa Dīpaṅkara also flourished in this period.[1] Nāro-pāda at first was at Phullahari and then at Vikramaśīla monastery. Many of the other Siddha writers belonged to Bengal, and wrote mystic poems in old Bengali.[2]

So far as can be gathered from the texts composed in this period the mystic Buddhism had assumed three important forms: Vajrayāna, Sahajayāna, and Kālachakrayāna. The ancient philosophical schools like Yogāchāra and Mādhyamika existed only in name, and in texts which were studied by a few scholars. The ancient Vinaya schools like Sarvāstivāda, Mahāsāṅghika, *etc.*, had only a limited scope for giving initiation to the novices; but the more complicated domain of Mahāyāna practices was reserved for those who had special initiation in Vajrayāna, Sahajayāna and Kālachakrayāna.[3]

Vajrayāna and Sahajayāna represented two aspects of the same mysticism; the first laid stress on ceremonials which had only mystic implications, whereas the latter dealt with the more advanced stage of that mysticism in which ceremonials had no place. The Siddha writers have treated this aspect of mysticism in their texts. Great importance is attached to the practice of *mantra, mudrā* and *maṇḍala* in the Vajrayāna and hence a great mystic value is attached to the various manifestations of sound, which, according to these teachers, could be visualised in the forms of gods and goddesses. When these divinities appear before the mystic, they form a *maṇḍala* in which they take their proper seat according to various dispositions, and the mystic, who is now speechless, carries on his worship with the help of the *mudrā* which is now his only language. Hence the

[1] For Atīśa Dīpaṁkara cf. *supra* pp. 334 ff. and also *infra* Ch. XVII.

[2] *Supra* pp. 383 ff. and Sumpa, *op. cit.* Index; *Kaula-jñāna-nirṇaya*, Introd.; *Dohākośa*, Part I; "Materials for a Critical Edition of the Old Bengali Charyāpadas" (*JL.* xxx. 1-156).

[3] For this and for a systematic treatment of the doctrines of these schools see *Tantras.* pp. 174 ff.; "Some Aspects of the Buddhist Mysticism of Bengal" in *Cultural Heritage of India*, I. 310; and *Bauddha Dharma O Sāhitya* (in Bengali) pp. 63 ff. (chapter on Vajrayāna and Sahajayāna).

utility of the multitude of gods and goddesses, represented in the literature and iconography of this period. Vajra is defined as the Prajñā of which the essence is the Bodhichitta, and hence it is the *śakti* in the Brahmanical language of the Tantras.

This display of Śakti is associated with the practice of Yoga which required the help of the Guru. Thus the Guru came to be given an exalted position in these systems. It was, however, not an easy task for the Guru to lead the disciple to the goal. He had to find out the special spiritual aptitude of the disciple and suggest to him the path most suitable for him. In his analysis of the spiritual aptitudes of the disciple, he seems to have arrived at a novel classification called *kula*. There are five such *kulas* technically called Ḍombī, Naṭī, Rajakī, Chaṇḍālī and Brāhmaṇī. The nature of these *kulas* is determined by the five *skandhas* or the essence of the five basic elements constituting the material existence of the being. These five *kulas* are the five aspects of the *prajñā*. The task of the Guru was to find out which of these five aspects was predominant in his disciple, and lead him along the path determined by it.

The practice of Yoga required a knowledge of the whole physiological system, including the innumerable *nāḍīs* within the body, and the different stations or the meeting places of various systems of *nāḍīs*, the three principal *nāḍīs* being *lalanā, rasanā* and *avadhūtī*, of which the *avadhūtī* extended up to the topmost station. The inner manifestations of the *bodhichitta* or the *śakti*, during its upward march along the *nāḍīs* through its various stations, correspond to similar transformations of the objective field of vision. These transformations have a great importance in Vajrayāna but none in the Sahajayāna. The goal of the two, however, seems to be the same, *viz. mahāsukha* or perfect bliss.

The Tibetan sources tell us that the Kālachakrayāna was specially developed outside India, in a country called Sambhala, but was introduced into Bengal in the Pāla period. One of the great teachers of this school, Abhayākaragupta, wrote a number of works on this school. He was a contemporary of Rāmapāla(*v. supra* p. 155). Kālachakrayāna attached a great importance, in the practice of Yoga, to the time factor, the *muhūrta*, the *tithi*, the constellation *etc.* Hence astronomy and astrology came to play an important part in this system. But so far as the goal is concerned it was the same as that of the other systems.

On account of this great emphasis on the esoteric aspects of the religion, although these had their root in Yogāchāra and Mādhyamika, Buddhism was soon unhinged. As time passed on, less and less importance was attached to the ceremonial aspect which still retained a faint stamp of Buddhism. The ceremonial being once

completely eliminated, it was not long before what remained of Buddhism was absorbed in the Brahmanical Tāntric system of Bengal, which by an inevitable process had attained a similar form. This assimilation had surely begun before the end of the Pāla period and was completed before the 14th century.[1]

We have seen that in the hands of the Siddhāchāryas, Buddhism in Bengal had attained a stage where its assimilation to Śāktism was an easy matter. The idea of Buddha had been dispensed with both in his *laukika* and *lokottara* forms; the Vajrayāna deities were no longer necessary, as they belonged to a lower plane; the *pravrajyā* and the consequent observance of the rules of monastic discipline had no importance, as monasticism was dead; and the formal aspect of the religion was completely discredited. The fundamental basis of this new Buddhism was that form of Yoga which we call Haṭhayoga. This Haṭhayoga, again, is a general designation of a variety of practices of which the distinctive features can now be hardly recognised. The followers of Śāktism do not as yet seem to have discovered the advantages of the Haṭhayogic methods, and had been pursuing the earlier orthodox ways.

The fusion of Śāktism with this type of Buddhist mysticism gave rise to new schools of Śāktism on the one hand, and certain forms of popular religion on the other, both of which have survived till our times. This new school of Śāktism is called Kaula, of which the fundamental doctrines are found in a number of texts, recently discovered from Nepal, which trace their origin to the teachings of Matsyendranātha. The doctrine of *kula* (from which the word *kaula* is derived), as we have already seen, is a special feature of Buddhist mysticism. *Kula* is used there to mean *śakti* which is of five kinds, and these are presided over by the five Tathāgatas. The sacred lore of the Kaula school is called Kulāgama, Kulaśāstra *etc.*, and the followers of its methods are called Kaula, Kulaputra or Kulīna. Kula is defined as the Śakti, and Akula is Śiva. The dormant divine energy within the body is called Kulakuṇḍalinī. An analysis of the Kaula texts clearly shows that many of their leading ideas had been derived from the Buddhist mystic schools. Some of

[1] Buddhist images discovered in Bengal mostly belong to the 9th, 10th, and 11th centuries, and only a few of them belong to the 12th century. These have been discussed in Part II of this chapter. Professor Foucher in his *Iconographie Bouddhique* has discussed an illuminated manuscript of the *Ashṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* of the 11th century A.D. It contains the illustrations of a number of Mahāyāna deities worshipped in different parts of Bengal. These include (1) Bhagavatī Tārā of Chandradvīpa, (2) Champitā Lokanātha, Jayatuṅga Lokanātha and Buddhardhi Tārā of Samataṭa, (3) Chundā of Paṭṭikeraka and (4) Lokanātha of Harikela.

the ancient texts of the Kaula school show that it had many subdivisions, the most important of them probably being the Yoginī-kaula, which is said to have been founded by Matsyendranātha and was connected with Kāmarūpa.[1]

The Kaula school which identified itself with Brahmanical Śāktism could not be ousted in spite of the vehement attacks of its orthodox critics, as its great strength lay in the acceptance of the Varṇāśrama. The other movements which did not accept the Varṇāśrama, and in which Buddhist mysticism survived, were the Nāthism, Avadhūta, Sahajiyā, Bāul *etc.* It is at present impossible to trace the history of the rise of these movements, and it is probable that they were indistinguishable from each other in the transitional stage. They gradually developed their distinctive character, and the transition seems to have been over by the 13th century. The followers of Nāthism, in course of time, lost their monastic character and were affiliated to the Hindu society as a separate caste.

Nāthism originated from the religion of the Siddhāchāryas, as its reputed founder Matsyendranātha seems to have been the same as Siddha Lui-pāda. The great teachers of this religion are called Nāthas, and the most famous amongst them were Gorakshanātha, Mīnanātha, Chauraṅgīnātha, *etc.* Mīnanātha was probably the same as Matsyendra, of whom Goraksha was the disciple. Their teachings exercised such a considerable influence, particularly in Northern and Eastern Bengal, that their miraculous tales became the subject of popular songs in Bengali which are of great importance for the early history of Bengali literature.[2]

The Avadhūtas, who were all *sanyāsins,* also drew their inspiration from the teachings of the Siddhas. Advayavajra, we know, was known as Avadhūti-pāda.[3] The very name of the sect indicates that it followed the Buddhist method of Yoga in which an exact knowledge of the *nāḍī* called Avadhūti is essential. It should not, however, be forgotten that this sect had a distant connection with a particular form of religious exercise which is very old in Buddhism, and probably also in Jainism.

The twelve Dhūtāṅgas, although mentioned in old Buddhist texts, were never practised by the orthodox Buddhists. The most important of these consisted of living on begging, dwelling under trees in forests far away from human habitations, wearing torn

[1] *Kaula-jñāna-nirṇaya,* p. 55.
[2] *Ibid.* pp. 8 ff.; *PTOC.* VI. 265 ff., 643 ff.; *supra* pp. 385 ff.
[3] H. P. Śāstrī, *Advayavajra-saṁgraha,* p. vi.

clothes *etc.*[1] The Jaina *Āchārāṅga-sūtra* has a chapter (I. 6) on the Dhūtas. It enjoins on the mendicants to live far away from human habitations, to live on begging, not to mind torn clothes, not to do injury to one's self or to anybody else *etc.* These are exactly the rules which Devadatta wanted to introduce in the code of monastic discipline, but on account of strong opposition was himself excommunicated.[2] The Ājīvikas also, we know, insisted on such privations. The Avadhūtas seem to have revived that old tradition of the followers of Dhūta-discipline, and this supposition is amply confirmed by the *Goraksha-siddhānta-saṁgraha* which was partly a code for their use. According to this text the Varṇāśrama is of no importance to the Avadhūta. Neither the Śāstras nor the places of pilgrimage can lead him to emancipation. He is without any attachment to any object and behaves like a mad man.[3] Nityānanda, the famous associate of Chaitanya, was an *avadhūta*, and the description which we get of his manners in the *Chaitanya-bhāgavata* contains a vivid picture of the religious life of the followers of this sect.[4]

The Sahajiyā was well established in Bengal before the time of Chaitanya, and its progress could not be checked by the protagonists of the Chaitanya movement, although they tried their best to do so. On the other hand, it was the Chaitanya movement which, in course of time, became deeply influenced by the Sahajiyā. The oldest reference to Sahajiyā is found in an inscription of the 13th century, the Maināmatī Plate, which speaks of "a superior officer of the royal groom" (?) as practising the *Sahajadharma* in Paṭṭikeraka in Tippera (*-Sahajadharmasu karmasu*).[5] Chaṇḍīdāsa was the earliest Bengali writer on Sahajiyā, and lived most probably in the 14th century A.D. The writings of Chaṇḍīdāsa have come down to us in a much altered form, and the *Kṛishṇa-kīrtana*, which has probably been preserved in its original form, contains very little of the inner doctrines of the Sahajiyā. We have, unfortunately, no other early texts of Sahajiyā, but it is possible to trace in the altered songs of Chaṇḍīdāsa and his *Kṛishṇa-kīrtana* some of the fundamental doctrines of the Buddhist Sahajayāna. Although Rādhā is the Śakti and Kṛishṇa, the supreme reality, the Haṭhayoga is not dispensed with, and the much discussed Rajakī of Chaṇḍīdāsa reminds us of one of the five

[1] For the Buddhist Dhūtāṅgas see Bapat, *Vimuttimagga and Visuddhimagga*, pp. 16 ff.

[2] *IHQ.* x. 60.

[3] *Goraksha-siddhānta-saṁgraha*, ed. Gopinath Kaviraj, pp. 1, 10 *etc.*

[4] *Chaitanya-bhāgavata*, Madhya III; Anta VII.

[5] *IHQ.* IX. 282 ff.

kulas spoken of in the Vajrayāna. The later writings of the Sahajiyās also attach great importance to the inner *nāḍīs,* the various *chakras* of the stations, and the lotus with thousand petals. They do not lose sight of the fact that Kṛishṇa is the Supreme Reality, and Rādhā, only the Śakti that makes him attainable.

As only fragments of the literature of the Bāuls have been made accessible, it is not possible to say to what extent they have preserved the ancient traditions of the Buddhist Sahajayāna. From the few songs already collected, it appears that they have preserved that tradition more faithfully than the Sahajiyās, as they have not allowed themselves to be influenced by Vaishṇavism. Rādhā and Kṛishṇa have no meaning to them, but the *nāḍīs,* the *chakras,* the *śakti etc.,* are regarded by them as of the greatest importance. The Sahaja bliss is the ultimate goal with all of them.

Buddhism, which was once a great religion, could not have survived only in some debased forms of popular cults like the Dharma-ṭhākur *pūjā*. It transformed itself into those living forces which inspired and guided the religious and literary life in Bengal for centuries even after the disappearance of its distinctive features.

V. General Review[1]

Before concluding this short sketch of the different religious systems, it is necessary to review some general features of the religious life in Bengal as a whole. We may begin with the comparative influence of the different sects or cults. On this point the testimony of Hiuen Tsang, the only direct evidence that we possess, leaves no doubt that the Buddhists and the Jainas were far outnumbered by the followers of Brahmanical religion in the 7th century A.D. Save for the gradual decline of the Jainas, the state of things described by Hiuen Tsang seems to have been true also of the subsequent period. The patronage of the Pālas no doubt gave an impetus to Buddhism and saved that religion from the fate which overtook it in the rest of India, but does not seem to have materially affected the dominant position of the Brahmanical religion. For it is worthy of note that by far the large majority of images and inscriptions which may be assigned to the period between 750 and 1200 A.D. are Brahmanical, and not Buddhist.

Among the non-Buddhist sects, the Nirgranthas, who later came to be called Jainas, were very numerous in the days of Hiuen

[1] Authorities for most of the statements made in this section are cited above.

Tsang. For reasons, not known to us, this sect must have lost its influence to a considerable extent in Bengal during the subsequent ages, as very few Jaina images and inscriptions have come to light so far. Of the two great sects in the Brahmanical religion, Vaishṇavism seems to have been more popular than Śaivism, at least during the last two or three centuries of the Hindu rule, if we are to judge by the number of cult-images which mostly belong to this period.

The royal patronage of a religion is not a bad index of its general influence and popularity. In Bengal the Khaḍgas, the Chandras, and the Pālas, and individual rulers like Kāntideva and Raṇavaṅkamalla were followers of Buddhism. Vainyagupta, Śaśāṅka, Lokanātha, Ḍommaṇapāla and the early Sena rulers like Vijayasena and Vallālasena were Śaivas. The Varmans, the later Sena kings and the Deva family were Vaishṇavas. No royal Jaina family is known, nor even any individual ruler of that faith.

But in spite of the existence of different religious sects side by side there was no sectarian jealousy or exclusiveness. This is proved by references in contemporary epigraphs whose value cannot be ignored. The catholic attitude of the Buddhist Pāla kings has already been referred to above. Dharmapāla and Vigrahapāla II[1] are given credit in official records for maintaining the orthodox social order of castes; Nārāyaṇapāla himself built and endowed a temple of Śiva, and not only attended sacrificial ceremony of his Brahman ministers, but also reverently put the sacrificial water on his head; Chitramatikā, the chief queen of Madanapāla, regarded it as meritorious to hear the recital of *Mahābhārata*.[2] Similarly Prabhāvatī, the queen of Devakhaḍga, set up an image of Chaṇḍī. On the other hand the Śaiva king Vainyagupta endowed a Buddhist monastery, while a Brāhmaṇa and his wife made pious gift of land to a Jaina *vihāra*.[3]

While these instances show respect and reverence for others' creed, certain facts indicate even a more intimate association between different religious sects. Thus the Buddhist Dhanadatta marries a devout Śaiva princess, and takes credit for his knowledge of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the *Mahābhārata* and the *Purāṇas*. Their son Kāntideva, although a Buddhist, adopts a royal seal which seems to combine the religious emblems of his parents, *viz.* the lion and snake.[4]

Still more interesting are the cases in which a king openly declares his devotion to more than one religious faith. Thus Vaidyadeva[5]

[1] Pāla Ins. No. 39. [2] No. 46.
[3] Pāhārpur CP. (*EI.* xx. 61).
[4] The Chittagong CP. of Kāntideva will shortly be published in *EI.* where this point has been discussed.
[5] Pāla Ins. No. 50.

styles himself both *Parama-māheśvara* and *Parama-vaishṇava* and Ḍommaṇapāla,[1] although a *Parama-māheśvara*, pays his respect to Bhagavān Nārāyaṇa. The copper-plate grants of Viśvarūpasena and Keśavasena are perhaps the most instructive on this point. The royal seal attached to the plates bears the representation of Sadāśiva, and is actually called Sadāśiva-mudrā in the body of the inscriptions; they open with adorations to Nārāyaṇa, followed by an invocation addressed to Sūrya; and finally the kings themselves are given the title *Parama-saura*. It seems the kings not only professed the two great faiths followed by their fore-fathers, but added a new one. These two Hindu kings of Bengal seem to typify the true spirit of the age. For even to-day the same spirit characterises the religious life of Bengal, where every orthodox Hindu performs the worship of Nārāyaṇa, Lakshmī, Śiva, Durgā, Kārtika, Sūrya and other gods and goddesses with equal zeal and veneration. Although some families are labelled Vaishṇava and others Śākta, they have faith in, and reverence for, all the gods.

While both Vaishṇavism and Śaivism derived their strength and inspiration from the magnificent temples and the great community of Brāhmaṇas distinguished for their religious zeal, learning, and scholarship, the main strongholds of the Buddhists were the numerous *vihāras* or monasteries. Hiuen Tsang records that there were seventy Buddhist *vihāras*, accommodating eight thousand monks, and no less than 300 Deva temples in Bengal proper. So far as we can judge from archaeological evidence and the accounts of Tibetan writers, the number of *vihāras*, monks, and temples increased in subsequent times. We can easily visualise ancient Bengal studded with temples and *vihāras*, the name and fame of some of which had spread far beyond the frontiers of India. Bengal was then the home of a body of learned Brāhmaṇas and Buddhist *bhikshus* (monks) whose livelihood was made easy and secure by private or royal charity, and who dedicated their lives to the highest ideals laid down for them in the holy scriptures. The most notable evidence in this respect is furnished by the detailed account of a monastery at Tāmralipti by I-tsing, who himself lived there for some time.[2] In

[1] *IHQ*. x. 321.

[2] *I-tsing*. pp. 62-64. After describing how the monks lived "their just life avoiding worldly affairs, and free from the faults of destroying lives", I-tsing refers to the strictness of procedure observed when the monks and nuns met. The nuns walked together in a company of two, but to a layman's house they went in a company of four. A minor teacher sent a small quantity of rice to a tenant's wife through a boy. It was brought to the notice of the Assembly, and the teacher, being ashamed, retired from the monastery for ever. A Bhikshu named Rāhulamitra

view of the general moral lapse in later phases of both Buddhist and Brahmanical religions, we should take note of the high moral standard of monastic life recorded by an eye-witness. That the Brāhmaṇas were also inspired by an equally high ideal is abundantly proved by the works of Bhavadeva Bhaṭṭa, Halāyudha and Vallālasena to which reference has already been made (*supra* Ch. XI).

In conclusion, we must emphasise the intense religiosity which characterised the people at large. This is proved by the nature, scope and volume of the extensive religious literature, both in Sanskrit and Vernacular (*supra* Chs. XI-XII), which grew up during the tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries A.D. As already noted above, we have to trace to this formative period the beginnings of many of those folk religions which exercised considerable influence over the mass of people in Bengal during the mediaeval period.

never "spoke with women face to face, except when his mother or sister came to him, whom he saw outside his room."

II. ICONOGRAPHY

1. Introduction

The time when images first formed objects of worship in Bengal cannot be determined with certainty. It is in a way bound up with the larger problem of the antiquity of image-worship in India on which widely divergent views have been entertained by scholars.[1] It is not necessary for our present purpose to discuss the question at length. But it does not seem likely that image-worship occupied an acknowledged and important place in the religious life of Bengal, till the introduction of various sectarian religions in which *bhakti*, or loving adoration of the one personal god by his devotees, formed the fundamental element.

There can be hardly any doubt that images were at first made mostly of perishable materials like wood or clay. Mention may be made in this connection of the interesting practice, chiefly current in modern Bengal, of making *kshaṇika* images of clay, worshipping these with pomp and ceremony on particular *parvan* days, and immersing them afterwards in tanks or rivers,—a practice which probably existed from very early times.

These factors, together with deliberate acts of vandalism, specially by foreign invaders, explain, to a large extent, the paucity of early examples of images in Bengal. As a matter of fact, not a single image, discovered so far in Bengal, can be definitely placed before the Gupta period, and very few can confidently be dated even in this period. Stone images came to be made in large numbers from the time of the Pāla rulers of Bengal. The stone which was utilised for the construction of these images generally belonged to the hornblende schist variety usually quarried from the Rājmahal Hills, and this as well as its variants remained the usual media for these purposes in Bengal. Another durable material which was less frequently used for making images in Bengal was bronze or octo-alloy, sometimes gold-plated, precious metals like silver being very rarely used. Some metal images associated with different creeds have been discovered in various localities of Bengal, and they testify to the high state of excellence which the art of casting metals attained here. It must be observed, however, that even when principal icons

[1] For a full discussion on this point cf. J. N. Banerjea, *Development of Hindu Iconography*, Ch. II.

and accessory figures were being made of such durable materials, the potter's and carpenter's services were also being requisitioned for the same purpose. The Pāhārpur and Mahāsthān excavations have brought to light numerous terracotta plaques illustrating various themes, religious and mythological in character.

With these few preliminary remarks we may now proceed to study the iconography of Bengal by classifying the images, discovered within the boundaries of this province, according to the respective creeds to which they belong, and describing some of the outstanding specimens selected from each group.

It is necessary to add, however, that the identification of the images cannot always be regarded as certain. As is well-known, correct identification of an icon is possible only when we can find a text describing the image to be worshipped, exactly corresponding in all details to the image in question. There are many images which do not fit in with any iconographic text known so far, and, what is more surprising, many icons found in Bengal, with definite names given in inscribed labels, do not exactly conform to their *dhyānas* given in current Tantra texts. It is evident, therefore, that either there were other texts not yet discovered, or the iconoplastic art in Bengal did not always scrupulously follow them. The former supposition is, however, more probable.

Further, it is to be noted that it is always difficult to assign even an approximate date to an image, unless it contains an inscription, which is very rarely the case; for the rest dates have occasionally been suggested on grounds of style.

Finally, a word may be said about the method of describing the different hands of an image which has more than two hands. These hands either hold some object or show a certain pose. For the sake of brevity these have been enumerated together, beginning, unless otherwise stated, from the lowest hand on the right, and proceeding clockwise to that on the left. The meaning of the technical terms is given in a glossary (*v. infra* pp. 475-79).

II. Brahmanical Icons associated with Vishṇu Cult

The Vishṇuite groups of images are the commonest among those discovered in Bengal proper. The four-handed images of Vishṇu, which are commonly met with, generally depict either one or other of the *vyūhas*, of which, according to the fully developed *Pāñcha-rātra* theology, there are twenty-four, or some of the *vibhavas* (incarnatory forms), especially several of the celestial ones. The

human incarnations of Vishṇu are usually endowed with two hands, while his Viśvarūpa variety is multi-handed. The twenty-four forms of four-handed Vishṇu images are differentiated[1] by the varying order in which the four hands hold the usual attributes, *śaṅkha* (conch-shell), *chakra* (wheel), *gadā* (mace), and *padma* (lotus). Sometimes the last two are personified as Chakra-purusha and Gadā-devī. The types referred to above are mainly cult images. A large number of reliefs, on the other hand, mostly decorative in character and datable in the late Gupta period, such as those of Pāhārpur, illustrate legends of Kṛishṇa, an incarnation of Vishṇu.

The commonest form of Vishṇu images in Bengal belongs to the variety known as Trivikrama. The attributes in its lower and upper left and upper and lower right hands are respectively conch-shell, wheel, mace and lotus.

The earliest Vishṇu image[2] is the relief-like free-standing sculpture of Vishṇu from Hānkrāil (Maldah) and now in Rajshahi Museum (Pl. XLV. 110). It is a four-armed figure, its upper right and lower left hands as well as the legs being partially broken. Its lower right and upper left hands hold a lotus-bud and a conch-shell respectively, and its sparse ornaments consist of a low *kirīṭa*, *kuṇḍalas*, *hāra*, *aṅgada* and *yajñopavīta*.

The elegantly carved huge image of Vishṇu, in greyish black stone, about 6′ 4″ in height, found near Lakshmankāṭi (Bakarganj), is one of the most interesting varieties of such images ever discovered anywhere in India, both from the point of view of its artistic excellence and its iconographic importance (Pl. LXI. 149). Vishṇu is seated in *lalitāsana* on the out-stretched wings of a three-eyed Garuḍa who is shown as about to soar upwards. The back right and back left hands hold two lotus flowers by their stalks, on the pericarps of which are depicted, respectively, miniature seated figures of Kamalā (Gaja-Lakshmī) and Sarasvatī, the latter playing on an antique-shaped harp. The right and left front hands of the deity hold *chakra* (with Chakra-purusha inside it) and the miniature figure of Gadā-devī. On a high hexagonal *kirīṭa-mukuṭa* is shown a four-handed deity seated with its hands in the *dhyāna-mudrā* and the back hands carrying some indistinct objects, possibly two of the attributes of Vishṇu (if this surmise is correct then this would stand for Yogāsana Vishṇu). On the top and bottom sections of the stella appear the flying Vidyādharas and the donor couple respectively, and the central figure is tastefully decorated with *vanamālā*

[1] For full discussion cf. *Vishṇu-mūrti-parichaya* by Vinod Vihāri Vidyābinod.
[2] The date of this image has been discussed *infra* p. 621.

and other usual ornaments. The severe simplicity of the whole composition, the shape of the harp and the plainness of the *prabhāvalī*—all indicate a comparatively early date, and the image can, with some amount of confidence, be referred to the early Pāla period.[1] Its unique iconographic features cannot be explained with the help of any known text. It is an uncommon thing in Vishṇu images to place Śrī and Pushṭi in the back hands of the central figure; again, the manner of its holding them reminds us of the Ghiyāsābād and Sonārang Buddhist reliefs to be noticed below; while the Dhyānī-Buddha-like presentation of the miniature four-handed figure on its head-dress is reminiscent of the Kālandarpur standing Vishṇu.[2] These Vishṇuite reliefs seem to show distinct traces of absorption of Mahāyāna features, and this is against the early date assigned to the image by N. K. Bhattasali.

The black basalt standing image of four-armed Vishṇu, from Chaitanpur (Burdwan) and now in the Indian Museum, is a unique piece of sculpture, and is perhaps the only known specimen of this type (Pl. I. 1). The central figure is almost fully in the round, its head and shoulders resting on the background of a *śiraśchakra* partially preserved, and its right and left back hands connected with the knob of the *gadā* (shown also as Gadā-devī with a staff in her left hand), and the rim of the *chakra* (also depicted as Chakra-purusha with a staff) respectively; its front right hand holds a lotus-bud, the front left carrying a conch-shell. The figure is very sparsely ornamented, a curious string of amulets round the neck replacing the usual *hāra* and *vanamālā*. The loin cloth devoid of any artistic arrangement is treated in a very uncouth manner. These and some other features, *viz.* the extremely elongated face, the big protruding eyes, the projecting muscles and bones, and the partially emaciated belly, seem to indicate that this is an '*abhichārika-sthānaka*' Vishṇu image which the *Vaikhānasāgama* describes as follows:

abhichārikasthānakaṁ devaṁ dvibhujaṁ chaturbhujaṁ vā dhūmravarṇaṁ śyāma-vastradharaṁ śushkavaktraṁ śuskāṅgaṁ tamoguṇānvitam-ūrdhvanetraṁ Brahmā-dideva-vivarjitaṁ...........kārayet.

T. A. Gopinatha Rao has described these types of Vishṇu images on the basis of this text, but he could not refer to any known specimen.[3] R. P. Chanda described it as an inferior specimen of the Gupta

[1] Bhatt.-*Cat.* 86-87, Pl. XXXII.

[2] *VRS-Rep.* 1928-29, pp. 15-17, and plate. K. C. Sarkar suggested that this type really represented a Bodhisattva in his paper published in *VRS.M.*, No. 4, pp. 19-23 and Pl. This suggestion is hardly acceptable.

[3] Rao-*Icon.* I (I). 84-85. This peculiarity of the Chaitanpur image was first recognised by the present writer (*JISOA.* VIII. 159-61).

period.[1] But the iconographic features as well as its seemingly southern style justify us in assigning it to about the 8th century A.D.

An image of Vishṇu discovered at Bāghāura (Tippera) is dated in year 3 of king Mahīpāla I and thus belongs to the latter part of the 10th century A.D. (Pl. LIXX. 168).[2] Another beautiful image with similar iconographic details is in the Indian Museum[3] (Pl. LXVIII. 165). The pedestal inscription of the former tells us that it is an image of Nārāyaṇa (*Nārāyaṇa-bhaṭṭārak-ākhya*) ; but the arrangement of attributes in its four hands (*padma, gadā, chakra, śaṅkha*) follows the order suited to Trivikrama Vishṇu as laid down in the *Agni Purāṇa, Padma Purāṇa* and the *Rūpa-maṇḍana*. Thus it seems there was no strict conformity in naming the twenty-four variant types of Vishṇu associated with the Vyūhavāda of the *Pāñcharātra* system. But that there existed the practice of differentiating these types is proved by the discovery in Bengal of stone and bronze Vishṇu images which show different modes of placing these attributes in the hands of the central figure.

The partially damaged stone Vishṇu from Burdwan, now in the VSP. Museum, Calcutta, belongs to the sub-order Hṛishīkeśa according to *Padma Purāṇa* or a variant of Śrīdhara according to *Agni°*. The unique seated four-handed bronze figure of Vishṇu (Hṛishīkeśa or Śrīdhara), originally hailing from Sāgardīghi and now in the VSP. Museum, shows *padma, chakra, gadā* and *śaṅkha* in the four hands; with the exception of the first, all the other attributes are placed on full blown lotuses springing from stalks held by the deity, as is the case with some Buddhist icons to be noted later (Pl. LXXI. 173).[4] The standing stone figure of Vishṇu (Trivikrama) from Surohor (Dinajpur) datable in the 12th century A.D., and now in the Rajshahi Museum, is of unique iconographic interest (Pl. I. 4). Like the Ghiyāsābād, Sonārang and Sāgardīghi figures of multi-handed Lokeśvara Vishṇu images, noticed later in the section of Buddhist Mahāyāna icons, the figure is made to stand under a canopy of seven serpent hoods; the *gadā* and *chakra* shown in the back hands are placed on full-blown lotus flowers in the manner in

[1] *ASI*. 1925-26, p. 163. R. P. Chanda missed the real significance of this icon. What he thought crude workmanship was really a studied effort on the part of the artist to depict the peculiar features enjoined by the text.

[2] *EISMS*. 36-37, 100, 134, Pl. IV (*d*).

[3] *ASI*. 1934-35, p. 79, Pl. XXIV (*e*).

[4] *VSP-Cat*. 138-39, Pl. XXV. R. D. Banerji observes: "This peculiar arrangement (of the attributes) seems to have been common in the northern part of Rāḍhā" (*EISMS*. 96). The Lakshmaṇakāṭi and Surohor Vishṇu figures show that this mode was also known in Vaṅga and Varendra.

which the attributes are shown in the composite images just noticed; instead of Śrī and Pushṭi on either side of the central figure, are placed two male figures, as in the same reliefs, but here definitely identifiable as Chakra-purusha and Śaṅkha-purusha on account of *chakra* and *śaṅkha* shown on *nīlotpalas* held by the respective figures. But what is of outstanding importance here is the fact that an Amitābha-like figure is placed just above the central snake-hood, and a six-handed dancing figure of Śiva is carved in the middle of the pedestal below.[1] The Kālandarpur stone image of Vishṇu, referred to above (*v. s.* p. 432) shows these identical traits. The dancing Śiva below would tempt one to describe the miniature figure on the top as Brahmā, the whole relief thus presenting the Brahmanical triad, Brahmā-Vishṇu-Śiva, and the snake-hoods may be explained as those of Ādiśesha, Vishṇu's attendant. But Brahmā is rarely represented with two hands and one face, and it is better to describe these sculptures as Vishṇu images absorbing Mahāyāna features (*cf.* the mode of placing the attributes on lotus flowers in case of Mahāyāna images of Mañjuśrī and Siṁhanāda-Lokeśvara). A beautiful standing bronze figure of Trivikrama Vishṇu found at Rangpur, and now in the Indian Museum, is of iconographic interest on account of the presence of Vasumatī, in place of the usual Pushṭi or Sarasvatī on its proper left (Pl. LXXIII. 176).[2] The partially damaged Sarangarh (Bankura) life-size Vishṇu image made of calcareous talc chlorite schist, now in the Indian Museum, is a remarkable piece, and bears a close resemblance to the sculptures found at Khiching, Mayurbhanj (Pl. I. 3). The iconographic interest attaching to this late mediaeval image is that it does not belong to the usual Trivikrama sub-order, as its upper right hand holds a *chakra* (on account of its other arms being broken, it cannot be determined to which particular sub-order it belongs) and that it bears on its back-slab, shown in the form of a shrine, the miniature figures of the ten incarnations. The *Purāṇas* (*Skanda* and others) lay down in connection with the *mudrā-dhāraṇa-māhātmya* that a person whose body (*vigraha*) is decorated with Vishṇu's *avatāra-chihṇas* is the lord's own self (*mam-āvatāra-chihṇāni dṛiśyante yasya vigrahe, martyair-martyo na vijñeyaḥ sa nūnaṁ māmakī tanuḥ*) ; this may have a distant allusion to such images as the present one and others found all over India.

The *āsana* (seated) and *śayana* (reclining) images of Vishṇu are rare in Bengal, the *sthānaka* or standing images being the most numerous. The Lakshmaṇakāṭi stone Vishṇu and the Sāgardīghi bronze Hṛishīkeśa noticed above can be said to belong to the

[1] *JASB.* N. S. XXVIII. 193-94, Pl. IX, fig. I.
[2] *ASI.* 1911-12, pp. 152-58 and plate.

āsana variety. The 12th century A.D. image of Vishṇu seated in *lalitāsana* on the back of Garuḍa, found at Deora (Bogra) and now in the Rajshahi Museum, shows the abnormal pose of the deity on the back of Garuḍa; Vishṇu and his mount, though carved out of the same slab of stone, appear as two separate images combined together. In such Garuḍāsana images in India the deity is usually shown seated astride on his mount.[1] The Lakshmī-Nārāyaṇa relief at Bāstā (Dacca) is one of the rarest images in Bengal. It is a very late specimen showing the god seated in the abnormal pose with Lakshmī on his left thigh, and one leg of each of the couple resting on the back hands of Garuḍa whose front hands are shown in the *añjali* pose.[2] Another image of Lakshmī-Nārāyaṇa, but this time seated on a *viśvapadma* pedestal, discovered at Eshnail (Dinajpur) and now in the Rajshahi Museum, is interesting. These groups of seated Vishṇu images bear a strong similarity to the Umā-Maheśvara sculptures, numbers of which are found in Eastern India and Bengal.[3] A black basalt pedestal of an image found by S. K. Saraswati at Iṭāhār (Dinajpur) contains the lower portion of a seated divinity, identifiable as Yogāsana Vishṇu from its front hands being shown in the *dhyāna* pose and the presence of Garuḍa below; this is a very little known variety of Vishṇu image not only in Bengal but also in the whole of Northern India.[4]

A fine large bracket capital of wood found at Sonārang (Dacca) contains a representation of the same variety of Vishṇu[5] (Pl. XLIV, 106). Another bronze Vishṇu, seated in Yogāsana and holding conch-shell, lotus, a *garuḍa-dhvaja* (or a Gadā-purusha ?) and the discus in the four hands, is now in the Boston Museum.[6]

Images illustrating some of the ten incarnatory forms of Vishṇu have been discovered in large numbers from different parts of Bengal. The figures of the ten *avatāras*, stereotyped in Bengal and other parts of Northern India, are usually carved in a row on stone slabs originally decorating some part of Vaishṇava shrines, and are also

[1] *EISMS.* 128. Pl. XLIV (*b*).

[2] Bhatt.-*Cat.* 88, Pl. XXXIV.

[3] *VRS.-Rep.* 1932-33, p. 16, Pl. II, 4.

[4] *JRASBL.* II. 10-11, Pl. 1, fig. 1. This 12th century ornate pedestal is interesting as it bears not only the figure of Garuḍa but also an elephant and a fat squat figure; a *nāga* and a *nāgī* (Ādiśesha and his consort) support with their raised hands the lower set of petals of the *mahāmbuja*, reminding us of the *nāga* pair raising the lotus of Buddha in the scene of the Great Miracle.

[5] *EISMS.* 109, 124, Pl. XLV (*a*). Bhatt.-*Cat.* 228, Pl. LXXIV. On one of the terracotta plaques of the main shrine at Pāhārpur we find another representation of the seated Vishṇu [*Paharpur.* 59, Pl. XLII (*d*-5)]. Dikshit's remarks about the uniqueness of this seated Vishṇu type require modification.

[6] Coomaraswamy, *Portfolio of Indian Art,* Pl. XXV (*b*).

often represented on the reverse sides of the square stone or metal slabs (*Vishṇu-paṭṭas*) which are frequently found in different parts of Bengal. Varāha, Narasiṁha and Vāmana are the only three among them who are very frequently represented as separate figures. The reliefs depicting two other *avatāras viz.*, Matsya and Paraśurāma, hailing respectively from Vajrayoginī and Rānihāti (Dacca) are, therefore, of great iconographic interest. Matsya (Pl. II. 7) appears as a four-armed hybrid figure, its upper half being human and lower half like a fish. In the front right hand of Paraśurāma (Pl. II. 9) is placed a battle-axe while the three other hands carry the other attributes of Vishṇu.[1] The reliefs belong to the late mediaeval period.

The best specimens of the Varāha incarnation are preserved in the VSP. and Rajshahi Museums. The Jhilli and Chāndpārā (Murshidabad) specimens in the former and the Silimpur one in the latter are among the best discovered so far. In these early and late mediaeval icons the head alone is that of a boar, while the other portion of the body is human. The Central Indian artists of the Gupta period, on the other hand, used to depict the god not only in this hybrid form, but also in a purely theriomorphic manner. The boar-head in the former mode is sometimes shown like a conch-shell placed sideways on the neck of the deity. The Silimpur (Bogra) Varāha datable in the 10th century A.D. (Pl. LXVII. 162), shows this peculiar form of the head; and the earth goddess is placed on the left shoulder of the god, an unusual mode. The Rajshahi Museum Varāha (No. 799) shows just below the leg of the figure the demon Hiraṇyāksha being chased by the deity in his theriomorphic form.

The Narasiṁha images, though not as numerous as the Varāha ones, are depicted in the manner usually adopted in other parts of India. The Pāikor (Birbhum) figure shows the head of the demon placed on the left thigh of Narasiṁha, while the rest of its body seems to hang on to the nails of the deity. Many other such figures follow this mode of representation; but there are some reliefs found in Vikrampur (Dacca) which show the main figure as six-handed, its front pair of hands thrust into the entrails of the demon, the middle pair taking hold of its head and legs and the back pair shown in two poses (*abhaya* and *tarjanī*)[2] (Pl. III. 11). In the Pāikor image and in a four-handed figure found at Rāmpāl we find the artists illustrating various scenes of the mythology connected with this form on the back slab.

[1] Bhatt.-*Cat.* 105-7, Pl. XXXIX.

[2] *Ibid.* 104-5, Pl. XXXVII.

The same mode of carving additional scenes on the stela is followed in the illustration of the Dwarf incarnation of Vishṇu. The central figure is shown with one foot raised heavenwards, above which is seated Brahmā; just to the proper left of its right leg planted firmly on the lotus pedestal is carved the scene of the grant by the demon king Bali to the Dwarf God, and on the pedestal below are placed the worshipping couple. The Jorā-deul specimen in the Dacca Museum follows these particulars (Pl. II. 8). Separate sculptures showing a normal but dwarfish figure of Vishṇu are extremely rare, and so the Purapārā specimen of the four-armed Vāmana accompanied on either side by Śrī and Pushṭi is of great iconographic interest (Pl. III. 10).[1]

Of Haladhara or Balarāma, the eighth *avatāra* of Vishṇu, only a few images are known so far. One was discovered at Baghra (Dacca) and is now in a private house at Dacca. This well-executed image is almost a replica of an ordinary image of Vishṇu; only the lower right hand carries a plough (the distinguishing attribute of Balarāma) in place of the lotus. There is an umbrella in place of the usual canopy of snake-hoods over the head of the image[2] (Pl. IV. 13). Two other images, one at Pāhārpur (Pl. LVIII. 143)[3] and another at Rajshahi Museum,[4] are similar, but they differ in essential respects from the one just described. Each of them has a canopy of snake's hoods, and holds a bowl, a club, and a plough in three hands, the fourth resting on thigh. The ornament of the right ear differs from that of the left in all cases, as prescribed in the canonical texts.

Having noticed a good many specimens of Vishṇu images, we may now refer to certain Bengal sculptures of Vishṇuite association which are iconographically interesting. The Rajshahi Museum figure of a twenty-handed deity standing in *samapāda-sthānaka* pose, accompanied by two seated pot-bellied figures, one on either side, with their right hands raised and left hands in *tarjanī* pose held close to their breasts, is of great iconographic importance (Pl. III. 12). Some of the objects distinguishable in the right and left hands are *gadā, aṅkuśa, khaḍga, mudgara, śūla, śara,* lotus mark, *etc.* (*r*) and *chakra, kheṭaka, dhanu, tarjanī, pāśa* and *śaṅkha* (*l*). The central deity is decorated with *vanamālā* and other usual ornaments. B. B. Vidyavinod refers to four-faced and twenty-handed images of Hari-Śaṅkara in his *Vishṇu-mūrti-parichaya*; the same type, with slight

[1] *EISMS.* 105, Pl. XLVII (*a*).
[2] *Ann. Rep. Dacca Museum,* 1940-41, p. 4.
[3] *Pāhārpur.* Pl. XXVII (*b*).
[4] *Saraswati-Sculpture.* 48-49.

differences in the placing of attributes, is described as Viśvarūpa in *Rūpa-maṇḍana (viṃśatyā hastakair-yukto viśvarūpaś-chaturmukhaḥ).* Viśvarūpa is a variety of Vishṇu image, and the sculpture in question, though one-faced, may depict a local variety of the same.

A very interesting figure of Kāmadeva recognisable as such from the disproportionately long and heavy sugarcane bow and arrow in his hands and his flower garland is shown standing in a *tribhaṅga* pose on a double-petalled lotus and the artist has cleverly depicted the coquettish smile on his lips. Two female figures, perhaps his consorts Rati and Tṛishā, stand in graceful pose, one on either side and the partially pointed stela is tastefully carved. The piece of sculpture (Pl. v. 14), which was found in North Bengal, closely resembles the Deopārā one now in the Rajshahi Museum (Pl. v. 16).[1] The latter relief shows the richly decorated central figure in a similar position, holding the long sugarcane bow and the tip of of a three-pronged *śara*-like object with his left and right hands, and accompanied by a female figure carrying a water-pot, and a male with a quiver full of arrows on its proper right and left respectively. Just below the *pañcharatha* pedestal is a rat (?) couchant. Stella Kramrisch describes the latter sculpture as a Śivaite deity; but the two sculptures, when studied side by side, leave little doubt that both represent the same god, though the couchant animal in the case of the latter can not be satisfactorily explained. The Rajshahi Museum specimen is to be dated in the end of the 12th century A.D.

A crudely executed sculpture in the collection of the Indian Museum, originally found in North Bengal, shows a composite deity *viz.* Brahmā-Vishṇu (Pl. I. 2), and is unique from the iconographic point of view. Of the four faces of Brahmā only three are shown, his attributes *sruk, sruva, akshamālā* and *kamaṇḍalu* being present in the four hands. Vishṇu's attendant goddesses Śrī and Pushṭi, as also the *āyudha-purushas—Śaṅkha* and *Chakra*—clumsily executed with their respective emblems on the head, stand on two sides of the central figure, who is also decorated by the *vanamālā*. On the pedestal are depicted the respective mounts of the gods—goose in the centre and the Garuḍa in the right[2] This composite sculpture is reminiscent of the Dattātreya or Hari-Hara Pitāmaha reliefs of both Northern and Southern India, materially differing from them, however, by the omission of some features of Hara in it.

Brahmā alone is generally depicted in Bengal as a three-headed (the fourth head is not shown as the sculptures are seldom fully in the round), pot-bellied and four-handed deity with his usual attri-

[1] *ASI.* 1934-35, p. 79; *Rūpam,* No. 40, p. 117, fig. 38.
[2] *ASI.* 1934-35, pp. 79-80.

butes, seated in the *lalitāsana* pose with his *vāhana* carved on the pedestal; the Ghātnagar (Dinajpur) sculpture, in the Rajshahi Museum collection is a representative specimen of the usual type (Pl. v. 15).

The account of Vishṇuite icons will be incomplete, if the characteristic mode of depicting Garuḍa, the mount of Vishṇu, is left unnoticed. We have already referred to composite icons where Vishṇu is represented as riding on his bird-vehicle. There are also a few independent figures of Garuḍa serving as capitals of columns which were usually erected in front of Vaishṇava shrines. He is depicted with the face and limbs of a man, stylised locks of hair rising from his head, and with the beak, wings and claws of a bird; shown as a capital piece, he is sometimes janiform and is usually endowed with two hands in the *añjali* pose. The fine specimen in the collection of the Rajshahi Museum, belonging to the 10th century A.D., is typically representative of this type: it has three eyes and snake ornaments (Pl. LXV. 157).

Of the goddesses associated with Vishṇu-Kṛishṇa cult, Lakshmī and Sarasvatī (Śrī and Pushṭi) are the most important ones. They are very often depicted as chief attendants of Vāsudeva-Vishṇu in the *sthānaka* images of the god noticed above. But separate images of both are known in Bengal, as also in other parts of India, and the epigraphic reference to a temple of Sarasvatī shows that the latter, and probably both, were worshipped as independent cult images.[1] Lakshmī, when depicted alone, is generally shown as Gaja-Lakshmī, *i.e.* the goddess in the act of being bathed by two elephants—a motif known to Indian artists from the pre-Christian period. An eleventh century bronze figure discovered in Bogra and now in the Rajshahi Museum (Pl. LXXI. 174) is a very good representative specimen of the four-handed variety of this icon. The goddess stands in graceful *tribhaṅga* pose holding in three of her hands, *mātuluṅga, aṅkuśa,* and *jhāṅpī* (a peculiar kind of basket generally placed in the hands of the clay images of Lakshmī, annually worshipped during autumn in Bengal), while the fourth is broken. She is attended on either side by two chowry-bearing female attendants standing in the same pose. A beautiful lotus aureole decorates the head of the goddess who is being bathed by two elephants with upturned pitchers. The modelling of the whole piece is very artistic. The Rajshahi Museum has also a very beautiful bronze figure of two-handed Lakshmī without the aureole and the elephants.[2]

[1] Pāla Ins. No. 2, l. 32, refers to '*Kādambarī-devakulikā*.'

[2] *VRS-Rep.* 1926-27, Museum Notes by N. G. Majumdar, p. 5, fig. 3.

Separate images of Sarasvatī found in Bengal are usually four-armed, playing on a harp with the natural hands, while the back right and left hands carry *akshamālā* and *pustaka* (book) respectively. Curiously enough, the *vāhana* of the goddess carved on the pedestal is in some cases a swan, her usual mount in other parts of India, but in others, a frisking ram. The explanation of the second vehicle is perhaps afforded by a mythological story in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (XII. 7. 1. 3 and 14; XII. 7. 2. 3. and 7) closely associating rams and ewes with Sarasvatī.[1] The Chhātingrām (Bogra) image of Sarasvatī in the collection of Rajshahi Museum is the finest specimen so far known (Pl. LXXII. 175).

III. ŚAIVA IMAGES

It has been rightly observed by Mr. R. D. Banerji that "representations of the standing four-armed Vishṇu and the phallic emblem of Śiva were more popular than any other image, whether of the orthodox or of the heterodox pantheons" in the dominions of the Pālas.[2] It is a well known fact that in all the Śaiva shrines, ancient or modern, throughout the length and breadth of India, the central object of worship enshrined in the main sanctum is invariably the phallic emblem of Śiva. It is no wonder then that these phalli will be discovered in such large numbers in Bengal. But unlike the extant early specimens such as the pre-historic *liṅga*-form at Mohenjo-daro, the Guḍimallam *liṅga* of the pre-Christian period, or many others of the Kushān and early Gupta period, the Bengal specimens do not depict any realistic features. Almost all of them bear the usual conventional shape of the later period where it is difficult to ascertain the real nature of the object, though the *brahmasūtra* marks on some of them are dimly reminiscent of early realism. Among the Pāhārpur terracottas are to be found two certain representations of *Śiva-liṅgas,* the first an ordinary one, and the second, a *mukhaliṅga* piece (*chaturmukha* type, of which three faces only are discernible on account of its being a relievo representation); it is noteworthy that both these specimens show signs of *brahmasūtras,* though these have been misunderstood as shallow incision in imitation of a vertical section of a *liṅga.*[3] It is curious

[1] Cf. Bhatt.-*Cat.* 188-190, Pl. LXIII where reference is made to ram-fight and ram-sacrifice on the occasion of the Sarasvatī-*pūjā*.

[2] *EISMS.* 101.

[3] *Paharpur.* 59, Pl. XXXIX (*f*-1), and LVI (*e*). What Dikshit describes as a *stūpa* in Pl. LVI (*c*) may also stand for another *liṅga* with lotus decoration at its top; its surface seems to bear the *brahmasūtra* marks.

that no Śiva-*liṅga* has been discovered among the stone sculptures in the main mound of Pāhārpur, though several anthropomorphic figures of Śiva have been found. Of the stone *mukhaliṅgas* discovered in Bengal, the *ekamukha* variety is the commonest one. The Rajshahi Museum specimen discovered at Mādāriganj is a good and representative example of this variety (Pl. VI. 18). The stone *liṅga* discovered at Unakoti (Tripura State) is of great iconographic interest as it bears four well-carved human busts shown up to the waist on the four sides of its *pūjā-bhāga*.[1] Reference may be made in this connection to the sand-stone *liṅga* with four seated Śaktis on its four sides (*c.* 9th century A.D.), several examples of which have been discovered from North Bengal (Pl. VI. 17).[2] A bronze *chaturmukha liṅga* of a fairly early period (*c.* 10th or 11th century A.D.) recently acquired from Murshidabad district for the Asutosh Museum, Calcutta (Pl. LIX. 145) is extremely interesting from iconographic point of view. The *arghya* and *nāla* bear wavy incisions indicating the water usually poured on the top of the *liṅga* passing along the surface of the four busts on the *liṅga*. One of these bears a characteristically severe face, depicting the Virūpāksha or the extremely terrific aspect of Śiva.

Among the various anthropomorphic figures of Śiva, both single and composite, found in Bengal, mention may be made of such varieties as Chandraśekhara, Nṛityamūrti, Sadāśiva, Āliṅgana Chandraśekhara or Umā-Maheśvara, Ardhanārīśvara, Kalyāṇa-sundara or Śiva-vivāha and Aghora-Rudra, all of which except the last one belong to his Saumya or placid aspect. There are several representations of Śiva-Chandraśekhara among the basement reliefs of the main mound of Pāhārpur. Three of them, all two-handed, are reproduced in K. N. Dikshit's monograph on Paharpur, Pl. XXXI (*a*), (*b*) and (*d*). The third eye, the *ūrddhva-liṅga* feature and *jaṭā-mukuṭa* are all common to them, and though the attributes held by them differ, they comprise those usually found in Śiva images, *viz. triśūla,* rosary and vase. In one case Śiva's *vāhana* Nandī (Bull) is present.[3] These Pāhārpur specimens were pre-cursors of the later elaborate ones of the early and late mediaeval

[1] *EISMS.* 111, Pl. LI (*b*) and (*d*).

[2] *JASB.* N. S. XXVIII. 189.

[3] *Paharpur.* 39, 49, 50. Dikshit's identification of some other figures such as Nos. 60, 62 and 68 (Pl. XXX) as Śiva is probably wrong. S. K. Saraswati has given good reasons for identifying the first two as Chandra and Bhavishya Manu (Saraswati-*Sculpture.* 66-69). None of these figures bears the *ūrddhva-liṅga* and the third eye, the peculiar signs of Śiva.

period. Reference may, however, be made to a comparatively early bronze Śiva (*c.* 7th century A.D.) that was collected by K. D. Dutt near Jayanagar (24-Parganas)[1] (Pl. VII. 20).

The two-handed image of the Īśāna aspect of Śiva standing in the *samapāda-sthānaka* pose, found at Chowrākasbā (Rajshahi) and now in the Indian Museum, is iconographically interesting as it is decorated with a long hanging garland reminding us of the *vanamālā* of Vishṇu[2] (Pl. VII. 22). The other more elaborate figure from Ganespur (Rajshahi), and now in the Rajshahi Museum (Pl. VII. 21), though bearing the characteristic mark noted above, differs from the Chowrākasbā specimen in some material respects. It is a four-handed specimen with its front hands broken, its back right and left hands carrying a lotus flower with long petals and a *śūla* or *khaṭvāṅga* with its upper part broken. It stands in *tribhaṅga* pose on a *viśvapadma* placed on the central section of a *saptaratha* pedestal, attended by a couple of male and female figures on either side (the male figures carry *kapāla* and *śūla* in their hands, while the female ones carry *chowries*; the male figure on the proper right is fierce-looking). On the left corner of the pedestal are shown five figures in a row with their hands in *añjali* pose, perhaps the donors of the image. The whole relief is tastefully carved and is one of the finest specimens of such icons of the late mediaeval period. Along with these sculptures may be noticed the four-armed standing Śiva, still being worshipped as Virūpāksha at Kāsipur near Barisal which has been identified as Nīlakaṇṭha by N. K. Bhattasali on the basis of the *Śāradātilaka-tantra.* The image, though without the five heads enjoined by the text, closely follows it with regard to its attributes which are rosary, *triśūla, khaṭvāṅga* and *kapāla.* The additional features noticeable in the sculpture are: the umbrella in place of *kīrtimukha,* Gaṇeśa and Kārtikeya on the top right and left sections of the *prabhāvalī,* the lotus-carrying figures of Gaṅgā and Pārvatī, recognisable as such from their respective *vāhanas* (a dolphin and a lion) on the proper right and left of the central figure, below whom is shown his mount Nandī.[3]

Bengal seems to have evolved a peculiar ten- or twelve-handed type of Śiva Naṭarāja dancing on the back of his mount. Though it will be hazardous to say that this type is only to be met with in

[1] *JISOA.* IX. 147-48.   [2] *ASI.* 1930-34, p. 262, Pl. CXXXII(*d*).

[3] Bhatt.-*Cat.* 116-17, Pl. XLVI. The unique bronze Śiva with a Dhyānī-Buddha like figure at the top centre of the stela, recently acquired for the Asutosh Museum, Calcutta University, is another early type of this deity of outstanding iconographic importance.

Bengal and nowhere else, it can still be confidently remarked that it is the principal Nṛityamūrti of Śiva in this region. Such images endowed with ten hands closely follow the description of the dancing Śiva given in the *Matsya Purāṇa*[1] which lays down that *khaḍga, śakti, daṇḍa* and *triśūla* should be placed in the right hands, while *kheṭaka, kapāla, nāga* and *khaṭvāṅga* in the left hands of the god shown on the back of his bull (*vaiśākha-sthānaka*), one of the two remaining hands being in the *varada* pose and the other holding a rosary. The typical South Indian bronze Naṭarāja figures are shown dancing on the back of the *apsmāra-purusha,* and all such images are usually four-handed. In Bengal, especially in its south-eastern districts, on the other hand, images of the former description are common. Bhattasali refers to the name 'Narteśvara' given to one such type in the pedestal inscription, and notes that "in the suburbs of ancient Rāmpāl several images of Naṭarāja Śiva have been discovered, and a village in the vicinity is still called Nāṭeśvara." He divides such sculptures found in the Dacca and Tippera districts into two classes—one ten-armed and the other twelve-armed, the former following the *Matsya Purāṇa* description noted above. Three pairs of hands of the second class of images are characteristically depicted in the reliefs; the first pair, which consists of the normal hands of the deity, holds a *vīṇā* across the breast; the second pair holds a serpent as canopy, while the third pair is shown marking time (*karatāla*—not folded in the *añjali* pose as suggested by Bhattasali) over the *jaṭā* crest of the god. In this second variety the god is really shown as an adept both in music and dancing, and the South Indian *Vīṇādharā Dakshiṇāmūrti* of Śiva should be noted in this connection. Bhattasali refers to several images of both the classes in his work, some among which are fragmentary. The Sankarbāndhā (Dacca) image in the Dacca Museum (Pl. VIII. 28), one of the best pieces in its collection, not only closely follows the *Matsya Purāṇa* description noted above, but also introduces a number of miniature figures, thus heightening the action of the whole scene. The *nāgas, nāginīs* and *gaṇas* are carved on the pedestal, some dancing in an ecstatic pose, and on the right and left of the main figure are carved the two principal attendants, Gaṅgā and Gaurī on their respective mounts. All the principal deities with some other figures are shown round the central figure. The bull wistfully looking upwards at its lord, with two of its legs raised in the action of dance, has added a tense atmosphere to the whole composition. The intense activity, accompanied with rhythmic

[1] Vaṅgavāsī ed., Ch. 259, Verses 4-11.

grace, has been very skilfully portrayed in the piece by the anonymous artist who flourished in the Pāla times.[1]

Sadāśiva images have been discovered form different parts of Bengal, and each of the principal museums possesses a few specimens. Sadāśiva appears also on the seals of the copper-plate grants of the Sena kings who seem to have worshipped him as their family deity. According to the *Rudra-yāmala,* he is one of the six Śivas *viz.,* Brahmā, Vishṇu, Rudra, Īśvara, Sadāśiva and Paraśiva. Descriptions of this variety of Śiva image are to be found in the *Mahānirvāṇa-tantra* (XIV. 32-5), the *Uttara-kāmikāgama* (Ch. 43) and the *Garuḍa Purāṇa.* The last two texts, which are followed in Bengal more closely than the first one, lay down that the five-faced and ten-handed god should be seated in the *vaddha-padmāsana* pose showing in his right hands, *abhaya-* and *varada-mudrās, śakti, triśūla,* and *khaṭvāṅga,* and in his left ones, *sarpa, akshamālā, ḍamaru, nīlotpala,* and *vījapura*; and he should be accompanied by Manonmānī. The sculpture in the collection of the Indian Museum, Calcutta (Pl. LXXV. 178), bearing an inscription of the time of Gopāla III (*v. supra* p. 167), is a fine representative one of this type and closely follows the above description, especially with regard to the arrangement of the attributes in its ten hands. There is no Manonmānī by its side, but on the central section of the *pañcharatha* pedestal are gracefully carved two male attendants of Śiva, carrying *śūlas* in their left hands, the left one being that of a pot-bellied corpulent figure. On the extreme right corner is shown Nandī looking upwards, and on the corresponding corner on the other side is the donor couple. The sculpture is a finely carved specimen of early 12th century A.D. This close agreement of the plastic representations with South Indian texts, as well as their main association with the Senas who hailed from Karṇāṭa country in South India, has led some scholars to suggest that the Senas brought the cult of Sadāśiva from the south where it was much in vogue.[2] But there is no doubt that the cult belongs to Āgamānta Śaivism and was of North Indian origin.[3]

The next type of composite Śiva icons which are common in Bengal and other parts of Eastern India is the Āliṅgana or Umā-Maheśvara-mūrti. The extreme frequency of such images in this province as well as in Eastern India in general can be explained if we remember that these are the regions where Tantric cult originated and

[1] Bhatt.-*Cat.* 112-13, Pl. XLII. [2] *JASB.* N. S. XXIX. 171 ff.

[3] *Tantras.* 102. The two views can be reconciled by suggesting that the particular Sadāśiva cult, prevalent in Bengal from the Sena period, was derived from the southernised version of the original cult of North India.

developed to a great extent. One of the three-fold vows undertaken by Tantric worshippers of Tripurasundarī is to concentrate the mind on the Devī as sitting on the lap of Śiva in the *mahāpadmavana* (*Saundarya-laharī*, v. 40 ff.), and it is no wonder that initiates into the Śakti cult will have requisitioned these images as aids to concentration of mind (*dhyāna-yogasya saṁsiddhai*). A North Bengal sculpture of the late mediaeval period (*c.* 12th century A.D.) in the Indian Museum, Calcutta (Pl. x. 25), is one of the typical specimens belonging to this group. The goddess, with a mirror in her left hand and her right hand placed on the right shoulder of her consort, is seated in the *sukhāsana* pose on the left thigh of Śiva. The latter closely embraces the Devī with front left hand, his front right one holding a *nīlotpala* is placed in *jñāna-mudrā* against his breast, while his back right and left hands carry respectively a rosary and a trident. The deities are seated on a *mahāpadma* on a *navaratha* pedestal along which the right leg of Śiva hangs down, and their respective mounts, with a dancing female between them, and the donor, are carved between the top and bottom layers of the pedestal. Such reliefs, with slight variations in sitting postures of the central figures, in the number of accessory figures on the stela, or in the nature of the attributes in the hands of Śiva, are to be found in the collection of the different museums of Bengal.

In the above types of Śiva images, the bodies of Śiva and Śakti are shown separate, though in a very close embrace. But there is another variety where both are merged into one body, the right half being male and the left female. This is the Arddhanārīśvara form of Śiva which is comparatively rare in Bengal. The Purāpārā image now in the Rajshahi Museum (Pl. IX, 24) is fully in the round. It has two arms, and the Śivaite characteristic of the *ūrddhva-liṅga*. The left half of the image bears all the features peculiar to Umā, and the right half, the traits of her consort. It is a fine piece of sculpture and can be included among the best specimens of the late Pāla sculptures of Bengal. There are a few stories explaining this variety of Śaiva icon, but there is no doubt that all these are after-thoughts explaining, by way of mythology, one of the interesting old Indian concepts regarding the primeval cause at the root of the whole creation.[1]

The Vaivāhika or Kalyāṇa-sundara types of composite Śaiva icons were long regarded as specially South Indian in character, for very few such images were discovered from any part of Northern India. But during the last decade Bengal iconography has been

[1] *Kālikā Purāṇa*, Ch. 45. Rao-*Icon.* II(I). 321-22.

enriched by the discovery of a few specimens of this type in Bogra (Pl. x. 27) and Dacca districts.[1] They compare unfavourably with the well-known specimen at Elephanta near Bombay; but they are interesting inasmuch as they portray some of the local marriage customs such as pacing of the seven steps, the carrying of *kartṛi* in the hand of the bridegroom, *etc.* In such respects they form a class by themselves and differ materially from the South Indian examples. There is no doubt that whatever particular text might have supplied the northern artists with the theme, they certainly did not follow such manuals as *Aṁśumad-bhedāgama* or the *Pūrva-kāraṇāgama* adopted by the southern ones. The Vaṅgīya Sāhitya Parishat (Calcutta) sculpture is the most elaborate of all the known Bengal specimens. Here Śiva stands erect facing front with Pārvatī before him, and is surrounded by a number of spirits and deities. The Navagrahas are shown in two groups, on each side of Śiva's head, and there are several other deities, sages, and spirits carved on either side of the central figures.

So long we have been discussing the placid forms of Śivaite icons. But as Śiva was originally Rudra, the terrific god, so his *ugra* (terrible) aspects are also illustrated by icons. Many images of this variety are found throughout India, and specially in South India, illustrating particular stories about Śiva. Such icons have seldom been discovered so far in Bengal. But there are a few sculptures revealing the terrific aspect of Śiva though they do not seem to illustrate any particular mythology. These have been identified as Aghora-Rudra and Vaṭuka-Bhairava. A miniature burnt clay image of Vaṭuka-Bhairava in the Dacca Museum collection partially resembles the four-armed Bhairava image in the Indian Museum. The latter specimen is shown without garments, wears wooden sandals, and is accompanied by a dog. All these features are absent in the former which depicts the god with a flabby belly, and a long skull-garland. Flames issue out of its head, 'the eyes are round and rolling, and the lips are parted in a horrible smile.' Of the four hands, the front right is broken, the back right holds a sword, the back left a *khaṭvāṅga* or *śūla*, and the front left a *kapāla*.[2] The four-armed image of Bhairava discovered in the Dinajpur district (now in P. C. Nahar collection) stands in the *pratyālīḍha* posture on a severed human head.[3]

The other *ugra* type of Śiva, though described by R. D. Banerji as 'Virūpāksha,'[4] is correctly denominated by N. K. Bhattasali on

[1] For further details cf. *EISMS.* 112-13, 126, Pl. LIV and Bhatt.-*Cat.* 120-23.
[2] Bhatt.-*Cat.* 133-34, Pl. LIII(*a*).
[3] *EISMS.* 110, Pl. LV(*c*).
[4] *Ibid.* 110.

the basis of the *Prapañchasāra-tantra* (27. 8) as the Aghora aspect of Śiva (Pl. XI. 29). The god is standing in the *ālīḍha* posture with his legs planted on nude human and demoniacal figures, on a pedestal composed of nine skulls each, arranged pyramidally in groups of three. To the right and left of this pedestal a jackal and a vulture are shown feasting on carrion. The bull, carved between the legs of the deity, is looking up towards him. The eight hands of the god hold *ḍamaru*, *śūla* (piercing the breast of one of the prostrate figures), *śara* (being drawn from the quiver at his back), *khaḍga*, *kheṭaka*, *dhanu*, *kapāla* and *ghaṇṭā*. Two attendants holding *kartṛi* and *kapāla* in their hands are shown, one on either side of the deity, the fierce look of whose face has been heightened by the teeth protruding from the lips parted in a weird smile. Though the whole image seems to have 'a curious unfinished look about it,' still it is an admirable piece of sculpture belonging to *c.* 11th century A.D.[1] Another specimen of the same type of image, and of approximately the same date, was acquired for the Rajshahi Museum from Ghāt-nagar (Dinajpur). The central figure in it resembles the Dacca Museum specimen, just described, in most of its details, though it is interesting to note that the torso of this piece seems to be adorned with a *chhannavīra*. The difference lies in the treatment of the pedestal on which is carved some of the *upachāras* in place of the pyramid of skull, and the bull is shown goring the prostrate figure underneath the left leg of the deity. Though the images of Aghora are comparatively rare, literary evidence proves that this terrific form of Rudra-Śiva claimed a vast number of devotees throughout India from ancient times. In the Śaiva theology Aghora is one of the five-fold aspects of Śiva, collectively known as the Pañcha-Brahmās (Vāmadeva, Tatpurusha, Sadyojāta, Aghora and Īśāna), and a particular sect of Śaivism, which had this form of Śiva as its exclusive object of worship, came to be known as *Aghora-panthī*.[2]

The images of Gaṇapati and Kārtikeya ought to be studied along with the Śaiva icons, because both these gods had intimate mythological associations with Śiva. The former had no doubt a special class of worshippers of his own in India known by the name of the Gāṇapatyas, but there is very little evidence that this sect ever prevailed in Bengal. The extreme frequency of the Gaṇapati images here, however, can be explained by the fact that as he was regarded as the remover of all obstacles and bestower of success, he

[1] Bhatt.-*Cat.* 118-20, Pl. XLVII (*a*).
[2] *VRS. M.* No. 5, pp. 30-34, Fig. 9.

had an assured position not only among the various Brahmanical sectaries, but also, to a lesser extent, even among the followers of some heterodox creeds. There are various types of Gaṇapati images such as seated, standing and dancing. In seated and standing types the god is usually shown as four-handed, but in the dancing ones he is usually endowed with more hands. All these varieties are quite common in Bengal and several representations of this deity in stone, metal and terracotta were found at Pāhārpur. One of the two seated stone images of Gaṇeśa is of great iconographic interest. It is a four-armed grey sandstone image, and a rosary, a small radish with plenty of leaves, *triśūla,* and the end of a snake coiled round its body like a sacred thread are placed in its four hands. On the pedestal is a crude linear representation of a mouse, his peculiar mount, and the third eye of the deity is suggested by the logenze-shaped mark on the middle of his forehead. The terracotta figure of the four-armed standing or dancing Gaṇeśa, with his rat on the foreground looking up at its master, is a naïve and popular representation of the deity (Pl. XII. 31).[1] It will be instructive to compare with these early specimens the 11th century stone Gaṇapati in the dancing pose found at Bāngarh (Dinajpur; wrongly described by R. D. Banerji as hailing from Bihar) and now in the Indian Museum.[2] Another specimen of about the same date hailing from North Bengal, and now in the Indian Museum[3] (Pl. XII. 30), shows the god dancing on the back of the rat, accompanied by two figures, one on each side, who are dancing as well as playing on musical instruments. Of the six hands of the god, the right ones hold the tusk, axe and rosary, while the left ones bear assurance pose (palm defaced), blue lotus and a pot of sweetmeat into which the trunk of the god is placed. Just in the top centre of the pointed stela hangs a bunch of mangoes with leaves attached to the stalk. This fine sculpture does considerable credit to the artist who so successfully treated this grotesque theme with such balance and sense of proportion. The fruits to be found on so many Gaṇeśa images of Bengal are most probably symbolical of the fruit or success in any enterprise which is the result of the proper propitiation of the god named 'the bestower of success' (*siddhi-dātā*).

It has already been noted that there is little evidence with regard to the prevalence of the Gāṇapatya sect in Bengal. But there is one unique five-faced and ten-handed image of Gaṇeśa

[1] *Paharpur.* 42-43, Pl. XXXII (*d*) and p. 60, Pl. XLIV (*d*).
[2] *EISMS.* Pl. LX (*b*); *ASI.* 1934-35, p. 79.
[3] *ASI.* 1934-35, p. 79, Pl. XXIV (*a*).

seated on a roaring lion, dug up from among the ruins of Rāmpāl, and now being worshipped at a Vaishṇava monastery at Munshiganj, which was perhaps the icon of such a sectary. N. K. Bhattasali thinks that it entirely follows the *dhyāna* of Heramba Gaṇapati as given in *Śāradātilaka-tantra* (vii, p. 38) ; but though this text refers to the faces of this type, it does not specify the number as five, whereas some South Indian texts noticed by T. A. Gopinatha Rao definitely do so. It is very likely that this image owed its origin to the religious need of a southerner, and this suggestion is corroborated by the presence of the six miniature figures of this god on the top section of the *prabhāvalī*. Bhattasali has not noticed the significance of the number six; it has an evident allusion to the six sub-divisions of the Gāṇapatya sect, namely the worshippers of the six forms of the deity such as Mahā, Haridrā, Uchchhishṭa, Navanīta, Svarṇa and Santāna.[1]

Single stone images of Kārtikeya are very rare in Bengal. The elaborate stone sculpture depicting this god, found in North Bengal and now in the Indian Museum (Pl. XII. 32), is, therefore, of great interest. The god sits in the *mahārāja-līlā* or *sukhāsana* pose (an unusual one; *cf.* the abnormal pose in some Garuḍāsana Vishṇu figures) on the back of his *vāhana* peacock—the Śikhi Paravāṇī—standing with its outspread wings and plumes on a double-petalled lotus on a *saptaratha* pedestal. Two female figures with *chowries* (possibly his two consorts Devasenā and Vallī) stand in graceful pose, on his two sides. The back right hand holds his characteristic emblem, the *śakti* (spear), and the front right one, a *vījapūraka*; the pedestal and the stela are tastefully decorated with ornamental carvings usual in sculptures of this period. 'The graceful attitude and feeling of calm repose, as well as the dreamy eye, mark it out as a remarkable specimen among the products of the Bengal school of art'; it is assignable on grounds of style to the 12th century A.D.[2]

IV. ŚAKTI IMAGES

The wide prevalence of the worship of Śakti, the energic principle, in Bengal and Eastern India in general was responsible for the evolution of so many varieties of the Devī images. Mythologically these are principally connected with Śiva, but there are some which have Vishṇuite associations or show some Vaishṇava features. There is little doubt, however, that in spite of these mythological connections, many of these images were the actual cult emblems of the devout Śāktas.

[1] Bhatt.-*Cat.* 146-47, Pl. LVI(*b*). [2] *ASI.* 1934-35, p. 79, Pl. XXIV(*d*).

One of the most interesting early finds of this character is the inscribed Deulbāḍī (Tippera) bronze or octo-alloy image of Sarvāṇī (*v. supra* p. 86) of the 7th century A.D. (Pl. LX, 147). It is an eight-armed deity, standing in *samapāda-sthānaka* pose on the back of a lion couchant on a double lotus and a *triratha* pedestal, accompanied by two *chowry*-bearing female figures; the hands carry conch-shell, arrow, sword, discus, shield, trident, bell and bow. The image, though described as Sarvāṇī in the inscription (Sarvāṇī is the feminine form of Sarva, one of the eight names given to Rudra in the *Atharva Veda*), closely follows the description of the goddess with such names as Bhadra-Durgā, Bhadra-Kālī, Ambikā, Kshemaṅkarī and Vedagarbhā, given in the *Śāradātilaka-tantra*, a work compiled much later than the period of the image.[1] A four-handed stone image of the goddess, found at Mangalbāri (Dinajpur) (Pl. LXII. 151), stands erect on a pedestal on which is carved the figure of a lion with one of its paws raised. Her front hands are broken, but the back right and left hands carry a *triśūla* and an *aṅkuśa* respectively. The simplicity of the whole composition and the elegance of its carving mark it out as one of the fine specimens of the early Pāla art.[2] The four-armed stone image in the Indian Museum (I. M. No. MS. 10), hailing from North Bengal and datable in the 12th century A.D., is iconographically interesting, not only on account of the attributes (lotus and mirror) held in its hands, but also on account of the attendant divinities, Gaṇeśa on the right, and a female holding a lotus bud on the left. There appears to be the figure of an iguana[3] *(godhikā)* looking upwards on the proper left corner of the pedestal. Another recent acquisition by the same museum is the unique two-handed image of Durgā (Pl. X, 28) standing on a *viśvapadma* on a *pañcharatha* pedestal, hailing from Dakshin-Muhammadpur (Tippera). Figures of Gaṇapati, Brahmā, Śiva, Vishṇu, and Kārtikeya are carved in a row on the top of the pointed stela. The right hand of the goddess is in *varada* pose and her left hand holds a full blossomed blue lotus by a long stalk. This rare image is a good example of the Bengal school of sculpture of the early 12th or late 11th century A.D.[4]

The commonest variety of the standing four-armed Devī images in Bengal, however, is that which has been described as Chaṇḍī by some writers, and as Gaurī-Pārvatī by others. This variety is characterised by the erect pose of the central figure, the presence

[1] Bhatt.-*Cat.* 203-5, Pl. LXX.

[2] *EISMS.* 115, Pl. LVI(*a*).

[3] R. D. Banerji, [*EISMS.* 115 and Pl. LVII(*b*),] is inclined to take it as a boar.

[4] *ASI.* 1935-36, pp. 120-21, Pl. XXXV(3).

of an iguana on the pedestal, and such attributes as *liṅgam* with rosary on the upper right, a *tridaṇḍī* or a trident on the upper left, boon or pomegranate on the lower right, and vase on the lower left hands. The attendants differ in individual specimens, some of which are shown without any of them at all, and in a few of them we find miniature figures of lions and spotted deer just below the attendants. Such images have not only been discovered from various parts of Bengal, but also from the distant region of Java. showing the widely diffused cult of this goddess which probably migrated there from Bengal.[1] The large stone figure of the Devī from Mandoil (Rajshahi) is a good specimen (Pl. LXXVII, 181). Kārtikeya, with two lions beneath him, and Gaṇapati, with two antelopes, are on the right and left of the central figure. There are plantain trees on either side, and the miniature figures of the Navagrahas and of the donors. The iguana is missing in this relief. The sculpture is in the best tradition of the Bengal school and can be dated in the 11th century A.D.[2] Another such Devī image, with much more elaborate details and belonging to a later date, was discovered at Mahesvarpāshā (Khulna). Two seated goddesses (Lakshmī and Sarasvatī ?) are standing, one on each of the extreme faces of the *navaratha* pedestal, and on the top part of the conical section of the rectangular stela are carved the Brahmanical triad seated inside miniature shrines, Śiva occupying the honoured central position just above the head of the goddess. We miss in this elaborate relief the figures of Kārtikeya and Gaṇeśa and the plantain trees.[3] The unique Dacca stone image of Chaṇḍī (Pl. LXXVII, 180), with an inscription dated in the year 3 of the reign of Lakshmaṇasena (*v. supra* p. 218), has couchant lion for her vehicle, and holds *vara*, *aṅkuśa*, *padma* and *kamaṇḍalu* in the four hands. Like Gaja-Lakshmī the goddess is being bathed as it were by two elephants, with their trunks holding upturned pitchers, carved on the top part of the pointed stela. No iconographic text is known which describes such an image, denominated Chaṇḍī in the inscription. Bhattasali tentatively identifies it as Bhuvaneśvarī on the basis of certain texts in the *Śāradātilaka-tantra* (Ch. 8).[4]

Seated varieties of Devī images, endowed with four or more hands, are comparatively rare in Bengal. The beautifully carved

[1] F. M. Schnitger wrongly identified such an image from Java. For its correct identification, cf. *JGIS*. 1937, pp. 122-24, 137-44, and Pls. XII-XV.

[2] *EISMS*. 116, Pl. LVII (*a*).

[3] *Ibid*. Pl. LVII (*c*). The *godhikā* on the pedestal of many of these reliefs shows that the subject represented in them had particular association with the story of Chaṇḍī and Kālaketu, current in different parts of Bengal.

[4] Bhatt.-*Cat*. 202-3, Pl. LXIX.

four-armed figure of such a type (Pl. x, 26), found in Bogra and now in the Indian Museum (No. 4818), is seated in *lalitāsana* pose with her right leg dangling down double-petalled lotus-seat and resting on the back of the lion carved below. Her four hands hold a fruit (pomegranate), sword, shield and water-vessel, and she is tastefully decorated with a *jaṭā-mukuṭa, hāra, keyūra* and other ornaments. A four-armed goddess from Nowgong (Rajshahi), seated in an identical manner, and holding in her hands *vara, padma, triśūla* and *bhṛiṅgāra,* is flanked by miniature figures of Kārtikeya and Gaṇeśa on either side.[1] She may be identified as the Sarvamaṅgalā aspect of Durgā. The Niyāmatpur sandstone image of the goddess, seated in a similar pose, and holding in her four hands *vara,* sword (broken away), shield, and trident, probably belongs to the 9th century A.D., and closely follows the description of Aparājitā as given in the *Devī Purāṇa.*[2] A six-handed Devī image, similarly seated, with her right hands showing *vara, akshamālā* and *padma,* and her left hands *abhaya, bhṛiṅgāra* and *śūla,* is still being worshipped at Shekhāti (Jessore) as Bhuvaneśvarī.[3] A twenty-armed image of the goddess, seated in an identical manner on a double-petalled lotus placed on the back of her mount, and bearing such attributes and poses as a fruit (pomegranate), boon, protection, discus, sword, pestle, arrow *etc.* in the right and conch-shell, water-vessel, bow, trident, mirror *etc.* in the left hands, with a miniature *liṅga* on her head among the *jaṭās,* may be tentatively identified as Mahālakshmī, the supreme goddess.[4] This unique relief, which is now lost, was discovered at Simla (Rajshahi) and may be dated in the 10th century A.D. (Pl. XIII. 34).

The unique composite sculpture discovered at Kāgajipārā, among the ruins of ancient Vikrampur, depicts a stone *liṅga,* out of which emerges the half length figure of a four-armed goddess, with her front hands in the *dhyāna-mudrā,* and the back right and left hands holding a rosary and a manuscript respectively. The goddess has been identified as the Mahāmāyā or Tripura-Bhairavī (Pl. VI, 19).[5]

All the different varieties of the Durgā images so far described by us belong to her placid or *saumya* aspect; but the goddess, like her consort Śiva, had her terrific or *ugra* form. A good many images depicting the latter have been discovered. Mythologically, the most

[1] VRS. Museum Exhibit No. 1549.
[2] *VRS-Rep.* 1936-38, p. 26, fig. 3.
[3] *EISMS.* 123, Pl. LVII(*a*).
[4] Rao-*Icon.* I(II). App. C. p. 136; *VRS. M.* No. 6.
[5] *ASI.* 1924-25, p. 155, Pl. XL(*c*); Bhatt.-*Cat.* 192-94, Pl. LXIV.

important among such icons is the Mahishamardinī type which with certain elaboration came to be the accepted iconic model of the composite clay image in the annual autumnal Durgā worship in Bengal. The Mahishamardinī image of the goddess has been one of the most popular modes of representing her, not only throughout the length and breadth of India, from the early centuries of the Christian era, but also in Indonesian countries like Java. The underlying theme is carefully delineated in the *Durgā-saptaśatī* or the *Chaṇḍī* section—most sacred to the Śakti worshippers—of the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*. The history of the evolution of this type of images cannot be attempted here. It will be sufficient to say that in the earliest specimens discovered in Bengal, we already meet with the developed type of eight- or ten-armed Devī fighting vigorously with the demon issuing out of the decapitated trunk of a buffalo. A very interesting stone sculpture depicting the ten-armed goddess slaying the demon in the above manner was discovered at Dulmi in the district of Manbhum, and is now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta (Pl. XIII. 33). The goddess is shown in *pratyālīḍha* pose with her right and left legs planted firmly on the lion and buffalo respectively. She carries in her ten hands *triśūla* (piercing the neck of the demon), *kheṭaka, ṭaṅka, śara, khaḍga, dhanu, paraśu, aṅkuśa, nāgapāśa* and *sūchīmudrā*. There are two chowry-bearing male figures on her either side and the whole composition is shown as if it were enshrined in a *rekha deul* with *āmalaka* and *kalasa* on the top. The black-stone ten-armed image of Mahishamardinī discovered at Sakta (Dacca), with a pedestal inscription describing it as '*Śrī-Māsika-Chaṇḍī*' in characters of the 12th century A.D., is similar in its composition to the above relief, differing only in minor details.[1] The relief of Nava-Durgā from Porsha (Dinajpur) is an extremely rare type (Pl. XIII. 35) consisting of nine figures of Mahishamardinī, one represented as the central piece, with eight other miniatures grouped round it—five in the top part of the stela, two on either side, and one on the middle face of the *saptaratha* pedestal—all in the usual manner. The central figure is eighteen-armed, while the rest are endowed with sixteen arms; the head and the trident-bearing right hand of the former are broken away; the remaining right hands have elephant-goad, thunderbolt, chisel, stick, mace, discus, arrow and sword, while the left ones hold the *tarjanī-mudrā*, the tuft of hair of the demon, shield, bow, flag, kettle-drum, mirror, bell and *nāgapāśa*. The whole composition corresponds fairly well to the description of the goddess Nava-Durgā given in

[1] The Dulmi sculpture is reproduced in *ASI*. 1928-29, Pl. LIV(*a*) and the Sāktā one in Bhatt.-*Cat*. Pl. LXVI.

the *Bhavishya Purāṇa.*[1] The central figure is named Ugrachaṇḍā, the surrounding ones being Rudrachaṇḍā, Prachaṇḍā, Chaṇḍogrā, Chaṇḍanāyikā, Chaṇḍā, Chaṇḍavatī, Chaṇḍarūpā, and Atichaṇḍikā. The whole composition, in spite of the multiplicity of the hands and the vigorous action of the figures, shows a dignified balance.[2] The unique stone image of a thirty-two-handed goddess fighting with demons (Pl. I. 5), found at Betna (Dinajpur), is of great iconographic importance, as no such image or its corresponding text is known to us. It can not be described as a new type of Mahishamardinī, because some of the essential features of the latter are wanting in it, though its general pose is somewhat similar. Its face and some of the hands are unfortunately broken. A female figure holding an umbrella over its head is carved on the proper right, while the opposite side is occupied with the figures of four pot-bellied wide-eyed dwarfish demons; on the top part of the stela are carved the miniature figures of Gaṇapati, Sūrya, Śiva, Vishṇu and Brahmā; on the pedestal are carved several miniature figures in different poses, other than the donor couple.[3] The unique image of Ugra-Tārā, still being worshipped at Sikārpur (Bakarganj), holds knife, sword, blue lotus and skull in its four hands. The goddess stands with legs spread apart on a corpse, and has the five divinities —Kārtikeya, Brahmā, Śiva, Vishṇu and Gaṇapati—on the conical top section of the rectangular stela.[4] The presence of the five miniature figures on the top of the back slabs of so many Śakti images, a few of which have been noticed above, is iconographically interesting, for it shows undoubted Mahāyāna influence. Again, the way in which miniature replicas of the central divinity are repeated in the different sections of the Nava-Durgā relief described above, distinctly reminds us of the Arapachana Mañjuśrī.

An interesting group of Śakti icons consists of Mātṛikā images. The Mātṛikās are usually seven in number, and they really represent the personified energy of several of the well-known Brahmanical deities. Their names are Brahmāṇī, Māheśvarī, Kaumārī, Indrāṇī, Vaishṇavī, Vārāhī and Chāmuṇḍī. Their worship is very old, and their images, flanked on either side by the figures of Vīrabhadra and Gaṇeśa, and generally carved in a row on a single slab of stone, are found all over India. Several such composite reliefs have been discovered in Bengal. One of the Mātṛikās, *viz.* Chāmuṇḍā, seems to have been very popular, for several images, typifying some

[1] Rao-*Icon.* I(II), App. C. 114-15.
[2] *VRS.-Rep.* 1936-38, pp. 24-26, fig. 2.
[3] *JASB.* N. S. XXVIII. 194-95; Pl. 9, fig. 2.
[4] Bhatt.-*Cat.* 205-6, Pl. LXXI(*a*).

of her various forms such as Rūpavidyā, Siddha-yogeśvarī and Danturā, have been found in different parts of Bengal. A ten-handed image at Betna (Dinajpur) probably represents the Rūpavidyā form of Chāmuṇḍā, and very effectively portrays the weird and the terrible.[1] The Dacca Museum specimen, originally found among the ruins of Rāmpāl, is one of the best preserved images of this class. The goddess dances on a *gaṇa* holding in her six right hands boon, knife, kettle-drum, one end of elephant skin, arrow and sword, while of the corresponding ones on the left, the small finger of the front one is raised to the lips, the rest carrying bow, the other end of the elephant skin, skull, corpse and trident.[2] These twelve-armed standing or dancing images of Chāmuṇḍā may represent her Siddha-yogeśvarī aspect as mentioned in the *Agni Purāṇa*. An image of the two-handed Chāmuṇḍā sitting on her haunches, originally hailing from Aṭṭahāsa (Burdwan), one of the fifty-one *Śakti-pīṭhas* in India, represents the Danturā aspect of this goddess (Pl. XIV. 36). The figure, with its bare canine teeth, rounded eyes, ghastly smile, emaciated body, lean and pendulous breasts, sunken belly, and peculiar sitting posture, portrays in a remarkable manner the weird and the uncanny.[3] Two stone sculptures in the Rajshahi Museum represent two other varieties of seated Chāmuṇḍā: one seated on an ass is described as '*pisitāsanā*' (*piśitāśanā*) in the pedestal inscription, while the other seated on a corpse underneath a tree is labelled '*Charchikā*'. The VSP. Museum possesses a unique rectangular stone slab in the shape of a miniature shrine, having carved in its centre a four-armed standing figure of Brahmāṇī, flanked by a swan below her left hand and a lion below her right. This sculpture was found at Devagrām (Nadia).[4] This, the several Vārāhī images, and one Indrāṇī in the collection of the Rajshahi Museum (Pl. LXVII, 163) are the only separate sculptures of the Mātṛikās, other than the varieties of Chāmuṇḍā noticed above, so far discovered in Bengal.

V. IMAGES OF SŪRYA

Among the different types of cult images discovered in Bengal,

[1] *JASB*. N. S. XXVIII. 194, Pl. 9, fig. 3.

[2] Bhatt.-*Cat.* 207-12, Pl. LXXI (*b*). For the twelve-armed seated and dancing specimens in the Rajshahi Museum, cf. *VRS.-Rep.* 1936-38, pp. 27-28, fig. 4. Reference may be made in this connection to the Jemokāndi figure of the four-armed dancing Chāmuṇḍā in VSP. Museum, Calcutta.

[3] *VSP-Cat.* 84, Pl. XX. A few other Danturā images are known, most of them being in the collection of the Rajshahi Museum.

[4] *VSP.-Cat.* pp. 84-85, Pl. XIX.

those of Sūrya occupy a very important position. Numerous icons of the divinity have been procured from various parts of this province which has also the distinction of evolving some unique varieties so far unknown in any other part of India. As has already been noted above (p. 408), the cult to which these images belong was introduced into India by the Iranian sun-worshippers—the Magi —in the early centuries of the Christian era. The very great popularity of this cult in Bengal can be explained by the fact, that the worship of this god was regarded as specially efficacious, not only for attainment of welfare and desire, but also for removal of all diseases. An inscription of 11th-12th century A.D., on the pedestal of a seated Sūrya image hailing from Bāirhāṭṭā (Dinajpur) noted below, refers to Sūrya as *samasta-rogāṇāṁ harttā* (healer of all diseases).

The earliest Sūrya images go back to the Gupta period, and two reliefs from Kumārpur and Niyāmatpur (Rajshahi) show distinct traces of Kushān features.[1] In the Kumārpur relief the deity, clad in long tunic and flat and low head-dress, stands between two attendants on a high pedestal containing seven horses, with his two hands holding lotuses with stalks. The Niyāmatpur sculpture, executed in a coarse-grained sandstone, presents a more or less similar type, but the horses and the chariot are absent.[2] The bluish basalt image of Sūrya found at Deorā (Bogra) presents some development in the treatment of the iconic type. The number of attendants has increased, for besides Daṇḍī and Piṅgala on either side of the charioteer Aruṇa, the two arrow-shooting goddesses Ūshā and Pratyūshā appear as accessories. The seven horses with the one wheel are schematically carved on the *triratha* chariot pedestal, in which the god's legs are partly inserted as we find in the later Sūrya relief from Ellorā. The Kushān dress has no doubt disappeared, but the sacred thread on the body of the central deity, and his additional attendants in the persons of Mahāśvetā and the two queens *viz.* Saṅgā and Chhāyā—features almost invariably present in the Sūrya reliefs of the Pāla period—have not yet made their appearance. The treatment of the curls, the *trivalī* marks on the front of the neck, the plain circular halo with beaded border, the long sword fastened with a slanting strap on the left side—all these as well as the very refined treatment of the whole theme specify

[1] For a fuller account see *infra* p. 521.

[2] Saraswati-*Sculpture.* 12-15, Pl. I. Saraswati is inclined to date these two sculptures as well as the Hānkrāil Vishṇu as pre-Gupta on stylistic grounds. But the Niyāmatpur Sūrya is closely similar to the Bhumārā one which is certainly datable in the 6th century A.D.

it as a fine specimen of Gupta art in Bengal.[1] The standing Sūrya found at Kāśīpur (24-Parganas), now in the Asutosh Museum, is similar to the above specimen (Pl. XLVII. 115). The Dacca Museum bronze miniature Sūrya, originally found along with the inscribed image of Sarvāṇī, noticed above, closely follows the Deorā composition, though it depicts the main figures as seated ones. 'The miniature is undoubtedly a remarkable sample of the East Indian art of the 7th-8th century A.D.'[2]

The next stage in the evolution of this type is very beautifully illustrated by the remarkable sculpture in the collection of the South Kensington Museum, London. All the attendants appear in a body by the side of the main figure, almost in a line, with the arrow-shooting figures of Ūshā and Pratyūshā placed just above their heads; unlike the Deorā and Kāśīpur specimens all the figures are shown standing out of the chariot pedestal with their legs heavily booted. But the treatment of the lotus bunch in the hands of the central figure as well as the long sword attached by a strap to its left side is reminiscent of the two specimens noticed above. The eleventh century stone figure of Sūrya found at Koṭālīpāḍā (Faridpur), and now in the VSP. Museum,[3] is characteristically representative of the fully developed type of such icons in Bengal, though it contains some additional iconographic features like the swan below the charioteer Aruṇa, the *vanamālā* and a cord tied in the middle of the chest into knots like a *chhannavīra* in place of the sacred thread. Ūshā and Pratyūshā are carved along with three kneeling devotees, and from *agni-kuṇḍas* on the *saptaratha* pedestal issue lotus-flowers whereon the god and his principal attendants are made to stand. The Bāirhāṭṭā Sūrya, with the pedestal inscription noticed above, is a seated variety of the same deity, which is comparatively rare (Pl. XV. 39).[4] The eleventh century A.D. stone Sūrya, acquired from Mahendra (Dinajpur), presents an entirely new iconographic type of the divinity (Pl. I. 6). Though the composition is somewhat similar to the usual two-armed Sūrya figures of the 11th century A.D., its uniqueness lies in the number of hands of the main figure. Four-armed standing and seated Sūrya images, though rare, are known from parts of Central and Eastern India; but this one is endowed with six hands, its natural hands holding the usual full blossomed lotus flowers, while the four additional hands show *vara* (with lotus mark on the

[1] Saraswati, *op. cit.* pp. 21-22, Pl. V.; *infra* p. 523.
[2] Bhatt.-*Cat.* 172, Pl. LIX. [3] *VSP-Cat.* 76-77, Pl. XVII
[4] *ASI* 1930-34, Pt. II, pp. 256-57, Pl. CXXVII (c).

palm), *akshamālā, abhaya* (with *padmāṅka*) and *kamaṇḍalu*. The nearest textual approximation to this type is the description given of Dhātṛi, the first Āditya, in the *Viśvakarma-śāstra* as quoted by T. A. Gopinatha Rao (*Pratimā-lakshaṇam*, pp. 86-87); but this also does not fully tally with the specimen in question, for there the Āditya is four-armed and carries, besides the usual lotus-flowers, the *kamaṇḍalu* and *akshamālā*. The sculpture is remarkable, not only from the iconographic point of view, but also from the artistic one.[1] This type may be regarded as a composite representation of Brahmā and Sūrya, and iconographically compared with the three-headed and eight-armed Chidambaram figure, probably combining in Sūrya the members of the orthodox Brahmanical triad, according to H. Krishna Sastri,[2] or with the so-called Trimūrtis found in Bundelkhand region noticed by Hiralal.[3] The unique three-headed and ten-armed sculpture discovered from Manda (Rajshahi), datable in the 12th century A.D. (Pl. XVI. 40), contains the usual accessories present in Sūrya icons of this period; but the three heads of the central figure, the flanking ones being of terrific type, and its ten hands with attributes like *śakti, khaṭvāṅga, nīlotpala* and *ḍamaru*, besides the two usual lotuses, mark it out as of special iconographic importance. The description of the god Mārtaṇḍa-Bhairava—a combination of Sūrya and Bhairava—given in *Śāradātilaka-tantra* (*paṭala* XIV), closely tallies with this sculpture, though the text refers to four heads and eight hands of the deity (this being a relievo-sculpture, the fourth head could not be shown).[4] All the above types of Sūrya images are depicted with booted legs according to the accepted North Indian tradition; but the Niyāmatpur image and two 9th century A.D. reliefs in the collection of the Maldah Museum portray the South Indian varieties of bootless Sūrya (Pl. XVI. 41).

Revanta and Navagrahas are intimately associated with the solar cult, and several reliefs representing them have been discovered from different parts of Bengal. Revanta, according to the Purāṇic mythology, was the son of Sūrya, and iconographic texts lay down that he should be depicted as hunting on horse-back accompanied by followers. The late mediaeval Ghātnagar (Dinajpur) basalt image of Revanta, now in the Rajshahi Museum (Pl. XVI. 42), presents the god in a novel manner. The booted deity no doubt appears on

[1] *JASB.* N. S. XXVIII. 191, Pl. 8, fig. 3. The image is now in the Rajshahi Museum.
[2] *South Indian Gods and Goddesses*, p. 236; fig. 144.
[3] *IA.* 1918, pp. 136 ff.
[4] *VRS-Rep.* 1929-30, pp. 9-10, fig. 2.

horse-back, with a lash in the right hand and the reins of the horse in his left, with an attendant holding an umbrella over his head, but he is shown here in the midst of two robbers, one ready to attack him from the front, the other on a tree-top from behind. The pedestal shows a woman standing, a devotee, and a man with a sword and shield about to assault a woman cutting a fish with a fish-knife, and just above the horse's head on the right corner of the partially broken stela is a dwelling house with a couple within it.[1] In a sadly mutilated image of this god, found in an old tank at Baḍkāmtā (Tippera), and now in the collection of the Dacca Museum, he is depicted on horse-back with a bowl in his right hand, followed by dogs, musicians, and other male and female attendants.[2] This and several other specimens hailing from Bihar in the collection of the Indian Museum were wrongly identified as Kalkī; but they follow the textual description of Revanta as given in the *Bṛihat-saṁhitā* and other works (*Revanto-śvārūḍho mṛigayā-krīḍādi-parivāraḥ*, Ch. 57, v. 56),[3] while the unique Ghātnagar relief appears to be based on *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* (Ch. 108, vv. 22-3).

The Navagrahas are usually carved in a row, either on a single slab of stone serving as an architectural piece (*e.g.* as lintels over the doorway of the main sanctum), or on sculptures of other deities (*cf.* the Bengal reliefs representing Śiva's marriage, and the Mother and the Child). The fine Navagraha slab procured by K. D. Dutt from Kānkandīghi, Khari (24-Parganas), is a very good representative specimen of the group-presentation (Pl. XVII. 43). The Navagrahas are elegantly carved standing in a row on lotus pedestals, holding their respective attributes in their hands, with Gaṇeśa in the front of the row, and their respective *lāñchhanas* below. The beautifully decorative long rectangular slab, with the main figures inset in high relief, seems to show that the whole composition was itself a cult-object, perhaps utilised for *grahayāga* or *svastyayana* purposes.[4] Separate representations of these deities are extremely rare, and so the basement reliefs Nos. 60 and 61 on the main mound of Pāhārpur, correctly identified by S. K. Saraswati as Chandra and Bṛihaspati, are of unique iconographic interest. These stone sculptures were wrongly identified as Śiva and Brahmā respectively.[5]

[1] *VRS.-Rep.* 1927-28, p. 1, fig. 2.
[2] Bhatt.-*Cat.* 174-77, Pl. LXII (*a*). [3] *JASB.* 1909, p. 391.
[4] Appendices to the *VRS.-Rep.* 1928-29, p. 6, fig. 5.
[5] Saraswati, *op. cit.* pp. 65-67, fig. 17; *Paharpur.* 53-54, Pl. XXX (*b*) and (*c*).

VI. MISCELLANEOUS DIVINITIES

We may now note a few Bengal sculptures which represent goddesses loosely associated with principal religious cults. These were pre-eminently folk divinities raised gradually to some recognised position in the orthodox pantheon. The snake-goddess Manasā, the mythological account of whose recognition by the higher orders of people in Bengal is well-known, is a typical case of this kind. Hārītī, originally conceived as an ogress symbolising the diseases of small-pox and measles, and thus an object of popular worship and propitiation, came to be acknowledged by the Buddhists of India and, after some modifications and adaptations, became the prototype of Śītalā, the goddess of small-pox in Bengal.[1] Stone images of Manasā present her as seated on a lotus in the *lalitāsana* pose, with hoods of seven snakes spread over her head, her left hand holding the eighth one (mythologically, eight *nāgas* are associated with the goddess). Her right hand in the *varada* pose holds a fruit, and she is attended on either side by a seated emaciated figure and a crowned male person. The Dacca Museum specimen procured from the Dinajpur district tallies with the description given above; other specimens corresponding to the same were found by S. K. Saraswati at Bansihāri and Marāil in the Dinajpur district. The Marāil figure of Manasā has a pedestal inscription in characters of the 10th-11th century A.D. which reads '*Bhaṭṭinī(nī) Maṭṭuvā*.'[2] The Rajshahi Museum four-handed specimen found at Khidrāpallī, Nandīgrām (Pl. LXVII. 161), is another variety of the same image, where the goddess is depicted seated in *vaddha-padmāsana* on a double petalled lotus issuing out of a jewelled *bhadraghaṭa,* flanked on either side by rows of five *nāgas* with their hands in the *añjali* pose. A *nāga* couple is carved on either side of the *ghaṭa,* and the usual canopy of seven snake-hoods is present. Her hands hold a rosary, a snake, a pitcher and a manuscript. One other variety of the goddess is presented by the bronze specimen procured from the Rajshahi district and now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta (Pl. LXVI. 159). It shows the goddess seated under the usual snake-hoods in the *lalitāsana* pose, with a child on her left lap and her right hand holding a long leafy branch. It has been rightly remarked that 'in artistic qualities this figure of Manasā far surpasses the stone representations discovered, up till now, and it probably belongs to the early Pāla period.'[3] This two-armed bronze figure can be compared with two

[1] Cf. *IHQ*. 1938, pp. 101-9.
[2] *JASB*. No. XXVIII. 178, 181, Pl. 6, fig. 3.
[3] *ASI*. 1934-35, p. 80, Pl. XXIV(*b*).

stone images of four-armed Manasā with a child in her lap—one found at Pāhārpur and the other in the collection of the Rangpur Sāhitya Parishat.[1]

The four-armed unique stone figure from Pāikpārā, now in the Dacca Museum (I. B. vii), with a child in her two front hands clasped on her lap, and a fish and a bowl placed on her back right and left hands, has been tentatively identified by N. K. Bhattasali with the goddess Hārītī.[2] Recently an image of Hārītī has been found in the Sundarbans.[3]

A unique but unfortunately extremely mutilated sculpture in the Rajshahi Museum, originally found at Mirpur (Rajshahi), presents us with a new iconographic type of a goddess with a child on her lap (Pl. XIV. 38). The figure was originally four-armed, all of which are now broken, but her upper right hand holding a leafy branch is partially preserved; a cat looking upwards, on which the dangling right leg of the goddess is made to rest, is carved by the side of the *bhadra-ghaṭa* on the pedestal. This particular animal justifies us in identifying the goddess as Shashṭhī, and thus the relief may be described as an early specimen of such an icon.[4]

A few icons of goddesses Yamunā and Gaṅgā have been found in Bengal. They are usually represented as door-jamb figures in shrines dedicated to the important cult deities like Vishṇu and Śiva; but separate sculptures of these deities, though rare, are not unknown. The basement sculpture No. 23 in the main mound at Pāhārpur depicts the goddess Yamunā (Pl. LVIII. 144) standing on her vehicle, the tortoise, with her right hand touching a lotus on which a pair of geese are shown, and her left hand holding a branch of a flower or lotus. To her left a male attendant stands on a crab and holds an umbrella over her head, while to her right, a female one, also on a crab, holds a casket of flowers. All the figures are elegantly and gracefully carved.[5] We can compare this late Gupta

[1] *Paharpur*. 23, 88, Pl. XXXVIII (*g*). *VRSM*. No. 4, p. 30 and plate. Both these figures hold a long leafy branch in their upper right hands and a child in their lower left; the Pāhārpur one holds a snake in her right, while the Rangpur Sāhitya Parishat one, a fruit.

[2] Bhatt.-*Cat*. 68, Pl. XXV. R. D. Banerji described it wrongly [*EISMS*. Pl. LXIII (*d*)].

[3] The sculpture was brought to my notice by my pupil R. P. Mitra, in whose *zemindari* in the Sundarbans it is still being worshipped under another name by the local people.

[4] S. K. Saraswati informs me about an almost similar representation of the goddess, but with a *vajra* in her upper right hand, lying in the village of Santa in Bogra district.

[5] *Paharpur*. 44-45, Pl. XXVII (*a*).

sculpture of the river goddess with the tenth century representation of her sister divinity Gaṅgā hailing from Īśvarīpur (Jessore). The goddess stands on her vehicle Makara, as if walking to right, and carries a garland of pearls with both hands. She is accompanied on either side by a *nāga* and *nāginī*, the former holding an umbrella over her head, while the latter, shown in the same pose as the goddess, holds a pitcher in her raised left hand. This relief compares very favourably with the sensuous representation of the same goddess, fished out of the Deopārā tank and now in the Rajshahi Museum, belonging to the late Sena period (Pl. LXXVI. 179). An elegantly carved image of Gaṅgā in the village of Bhadraśīla (Dinajpur) is being worshipped by the people of the locality as Dakshiṇā-Kālikā. This is a good specimen of Bengal art of the 12th century A.D.[1] A different type of Gaṇgā, found by S. K. Saraswati at Triveṇī (Hooghly), is a four-armed variety and can be dated in the 12th century A.D. (Pl. XVIII. 46).

Numerous reliefs depicting a goodess lying on a bed with a male child lying by her side, attended to by females and with the miniature figures of Śiva-liṅga, Kārtikeya, Gaṇeśa, and the Navagrahas, have been discovered in Bengal and other parts of Eastern India. Various suggestions have been made with regard to the identity of the Mother and Child represented in them, the most recent one being that of N. K. Bhattasali who thinks that they represent the Sadyojāta aspect of Śiva. But this identification has been justly challenged, and in the absence of any better or more acceptable one, it is better to stick to the view of Alexander Cunningham that these reliefs represent the scene of Kṛishṇa's nativity[2] (Pl. XVIII. fig. 45).

A number of separate reliefs representing the Dikpālas have been discovered in Bengal. Most of these were originally Vedic divinities who were relegated to the comparatively insignificant position of guardians of the quarters, after the rise to importance of the various sectarian gods and goddesses. The earliest of them are found in the basement reliefs on the main mound at Pāhārpur, among which images of Indra, Agni, Yama or Varuṇa, and Kuvera can be recognised. The last-mentioned one is also represented in three other sculptures, two in stone and one in bronze, found in course of the excavation of the Pāhārpur site. The relief No. 29, in coarse grey sandstone, shows Indra with his mount (elephant), having his third eye placed horizontally on his forehead. The third eye is one of the cognisances of Indra, as the *Bṛihat-saṁhitā* and

[1] *JRASBL.* II. 13-14, Pl. I, fig. 2.
[2] Bhatt.-*Cat.* 134-42, Pl. LIII (*b*), LIV. App. to the *VRS-Rep.* 1928-29, pp. 19-22.

Vishṇu-dharmottara texts inform us. The sculpture faces east, of which quarter Indra was the guardian. The relief No. 34 in greyish buff sandstone on the south-eastern wall represents Agni as a flabby person standing erect and holding a *kamaṇḍalu* and an *akshamālā* in his two hands, flames of fire being depicted on the background. The sandstone sculpture No. 39 in the south basement wall shows a deity standing erect, holding a *pāśa* (noose) in his hands which passes round the head like an aureole, and a male and a female attendant with *pāśa* in their hands stand on either side of the god. The noose is no doubt one of the attributes of Yama, but it is the characteristic symbol of Varuṇa, as *daṇḍa* is of Yama; so the relief may as well be described as Varuṇa, though its particular position on the basement, if it originally occupied this site, would support the former identification. A defaced figure of Kuvera, the guardian of the northern quarter, appears on the back of the sculpture No. 59; K. N. Dikshit suggests that the relief showing Kuvera being damaged in course of time, the stone was utilised for a fresh figure on its other face, and then reset at the time of restoration.[1] Of the three loose sculptures depicting the god found at Pāhārpur, one[2] is iconographically interesting. The god is seated in *lalitāsana* on a settee below which a *śaṅkha* and a *padma* (two of the *ashṭanidhis* of Kuvera) are shown. The god holds a long purse in his left hand and its right one is broken. Two female *chowry*-bearers stand on either side of him, and there are the usual flying Vidyādharas. The sculpture is a fairly good specimen of early Pāla art. The Rajshahi Museum possesses several sculptures of the mediaeval period depicting some of the Dikpālas, a few of which deserve notice. The beautiful Varuṇa figure from Dhuroil (Rajshahi) is one of the best pieces in the collection (Pl. XVII, 44). The tastefully decorated god sits in *lalitāsana* on a lotus seat on a *triratha* pedestal on which his much mutilated mount (*makara*) is discernible. He holds a snake (really a noose in the shape of a snake—*nāgapāśa*) in his right hand and his left hand, now broken, must have held a water-pot. The sculpture is a fine specimen of Bengal art of the 11th century A.D. The late mediaeval sculpture showing Nirṛiti riding on the back of a man (*naravāhana*), and holding in his two hands a sword and a shield, represents one of the rarest motifs; it was collected from North Bengal. A figure of Yama, showing in his two hands *daṇḍa* and *tarjanī*, and standing astride with a buffalo in relief on the

[1] *Paharpur*. Pl. XXVII (*d*)—Indra; Pl. XXXII (*a*) and (*b*)—Yama and Agni; Pl. XXXVI (*b*)—defaced Kubera; Pl. XXXVIII (*b*)—seated Kubera; Pl. LVIII (*e*)—bronze Kubera. Saraswati, *op. cit.* pp. 60-65.

[2] *Ibid.* Pl. XXXII (*c*).

pedestal, is another interesting exhibit in the VRS. collection. The sculpture in the Rajshahi Museum, which shows a male figure holding a balance, and which bears usual eleventh century decoration, is an iconographic enigma; the balance in its hand may tempt one to suggest that it represents Dharma weighing impartial justice.

VII. JAINA IMAGES

As already noted above, Jainism flourished in Bengal long before the Christian era, and continued to be a dominant creed at least up to the 7th century A.D. Nevertheless Jaina images found in Bengal are few in number. This is evidently due to the fact that Jainism was a spent force in Bengal from the eighth century onwards, the period to which by far the large majority of Bengal images belong.

Of the different groups of Jaina images, those of the twenty-four Tīrthaṅkaras and of their attendants, the numerous Yakshas and Yakshiṇīs, are the most important. The unique image of Ṛishabhanātha discovered at Surohor (Dinajpur) is a remarkable piece of sculpture of approximately the 10th century A.D. (Pl. XIX, 47). Shaped in the form of a miniature shrine, it contains the central figure of the Jina, with his characteristic *lāñchhana* (bull) below the pedestal on which he is seated in the *vaddha-padmāsana* with his hands in the *dhyāna-mudrā,* and the miniature figures of twenty-three other Jinas with their peculiar marks, seated inside small shrines in similar attitude as the central figure. These are arranged in tiers, seven on either side of the main image, and nine in three parallel rows of three on the top. These last three rows are made to project a little forward, thus serving as a sort of canopy to the principal figure. Two *chowry*-bearing attendants stand in graceful pose, one on either side of it, and at a level with its *jaṭā-mukuta* are shown garland-bearing *vidyādhara* couples flying among the conventional representation of the clouds. The whole composition is carved with minute skill and refined delicacy, and probably belongs to the early Pāla period.[1] In another image of the same Tīrthaṅkara, discovered at Barabhum (Midnapur) and now in the Indian Museum, the miniature figures of the twenty-four Jinas are arranged in four rows of three each on either side of the main image, all standing in *kāyotsarga* pose as the latter. The artist sticks to the number twenty-four for the sake of symmetry, though properly speaking the number should have been twenty-three as in the Surohor sculpture.

[1] *VRS-Rep.* 1932-34, pp. 17-19. Pl. III.

The workmanship is good and the figure may be dated not later than the 11th century A.D.[1]

The Indian Museum possesses a figure of Jina Pārśvanātha found at Deulbhira (Bankura) and probably belonging to the 10th century A.D. The deity is shown seated in the usual Yoga posture, with the seven hoods of a snake spread over his head, and his characteristic *lāñchhana* beneath the lotus seat; the *chowry*-bearing figures on either side are present, but no other Jinas are represented by his side. An image of the same deity standing in the *kāyotsarga* posture with his usual characteristics and attendants (Pl. XIX. 49), having the miniature figures of twenty-three other Jinas seated in rows of two each, eleven on its right and twelve on its left, is now at Kāntābeniā (24-Parganas). The execution of the image is good and its date is probably 11th century A.D.[2]

The VSP. Museum, Calcutta, contains a rare specimen of Jina Śāntinātha standing in usual pose between two *chowry*-bearing attendants (Pl. XIX, 48). On the back slab are carved the *navagrahas,* five on one side and four on the other, and the pedestal shows his *lāñchhana,* an antelope. The sculpture which originally hailed from Ujani (Burdwan) is a heavy one and can be roughly dated in the 12th century A.D.[3]

There are several reliefs in the collection of the Rajshahi Museum which depict a seated couple with children in their laps, and a tree *(kalpa-vṛiksha)* spreading its branches above them. Miniature figures in *yoga* posture are invariably placed above the branches. These have been usually described as tutelary Yaksha couple generally associated with the Jaina cult, but there can be very little doubt that they are somewhat elaborate adaptations of the Kuvera-Hāritī figures, often associated with Mahāyāna Buddhism. Peculiar interest attaches to a unique bronze miniature found at Nalgora (24-Parganas).[4] The statuette (Pl. LXIV. 153) represents a female deity standing on a lotus underneath the bent bow of a tree, clasping a child on her waist with her left hand, and holding some flower in her right, with another nude child standing close to her on her right. Just near the bottom of the tree is the miniature figure of a lion which seems to be her cognisance. It most probably represents Kushmāṇḍinī or Ambikā, the Yakshiṇī of Neminātha, her cognisances being a lion and two children.

[1] *ASI.* 1929-30, p. 195.
[2] There is a similar image inside the Siddheśvara temple at Bahulārā.
[3] *VSP-Cat.* 47-48, Pl. x.
[4] *VRS. M.* No. 4.

VIII. BUDDHISTIC IMAGES

The earliest among the extant Buddhist images in Bengal is the standing Buddha from Bihārail (Rajshahi), now in the Rajshahi Museum,[1] datable in early fifth century A.D. (Pl. XLVI. 112).

Another very interesting Buddhist icon of the Gupta period (c. 6th century A.D.), found in the Balāidhāp mound near Mahāsthān (ancient Puṇḍravardhana), is the gold-plated bronze figure of Mañjuśrī now in the collection of the Rajshahi Museum (Pl. XLVI, 111 and 113). The figure is fully in the round, and is depicted standing in a *dvibhaṅga* pose. A figure of the Dhyānī-Buddha Akshobhya, the spiritual father of Mañjuśrī, is placed among the clusters of *jaṭā* on its head. Of its arms, the right fore-arm is broken, and the left is shown in the *vyākhyāna* or the *vitarka* pose, one quite suitable for a god of wisdom, the Buddhist counterpart of Brahmā. The upper part of the body is only covered by a scarf worn in the *upavītī* fashion, the lower half being clad in a *dhoti* fastened to the waist by means of a two-stringed girdle. The sacred thread, the *ūrṇā*, the distended ear-lobes, the *trivalī* marks on the front neck *etc.* are all present in the cast bronze figure. It is undoubtedly one of the finest pieces of bronze icons discovered in Northern and Eastern India.

A stone figure of Buddha is now being worshipped as Śiva at Śivvāṭī (Khulna) (Pl. LXX. 170). It is in the *bhū-sparśa* pose (thus typifying the Enlightenment scene), with the three other Great Miracles *viz.*, the birth, preaching of the first sermon, and *mahāparinirvāṇa*, and the four added ones of Buddha's taming of Nālāgiri at Rājagṛiha, the descent of the Master from the Trayastrimśa Heaven at Śāṅkāsya, his performance of the miracles at Śrāvastī, and the monkey's offering of honey to him at Vaiśālī, carved on the *prabhāvalī* of the principal figure in the centre of the composition. Although many images of this type have been found in Bihar, this is the only specimen discovered so far in Bengal.[2] Some detached sculptures, showing not only the four Great Miracles but also some added ones, were found at Kirtāil (Rajshahi). These are now in the Rajshahi Museum, and may be dated in the 11th century A.D. The figure of Vajrāsana Buddha with the right hand in the *bhūsparśa-mudrā*, hailing from the village of Ujāni (Faridpur) and now in the Dacca Museum (Pl. LXVIII. 164), is interesting, for it represents the miracle of Enlightenment. The depiction of a

[1] The date and details of the image have been discussed *infra* p. 523.
[2] *EISMS.* 61-62, Pl. XIX (c).

vajra and the seven jewels on the pedestal are worth noting. Its date is *c.* 11th century A.D.[1]

That during the time of the Pāla and the early Sena rulers, Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna forms of Buddhism had a wide prevalence in Bengal, specially Eastern and Northern Bengal, is fully substantiated by the discovery of numerous images of various types of divinities associated with these cults.

The Mahāyāna pantheon is based on a conception of the Ādi-Buddha and Ādi-Prajñā, also called Prajñā-Pāramitā, the universal father and universal mother. From this pair emanate the five Dhyānī-Buddhas (Pañcha-Tathāgatas) *viz.*, Vairochana, Akshobhya, Ratna-sambhava, Amitābha, and Amoghasiddhi, to which is sometimes added a sixth, the Vajrasattva. They are absorbed in *yoga*, but each of them has an active counterpart called Bodhisattva, and a human (*mānushī*) Buddha. We are now living in the age of Dhyānī-Buddha Amitābha, the corresponding Bodhisattva and Buddha being Avalokiteśvara (Lokanātha) and Gautama. In addition to Avalokiteśvara two other Bodhisattvas, Mañjuśrī and Maitreya, occupy a prominent position in the Mahāyāna pantheon. Of the goddesses the most important are the Tārās of five different colours.

The Sukhabāspur (Dacca) specimen of Vajrasattva, with the Buddhist creed inscribed on its back in the Bengali script of the 10th century A.D., shows that the concept of the sixth Dhyānī-Buddha, in addition to the Pañcha-Tathāgatas, had already been introduced in Bengal Buddhism. Vajrasattva, also known as Vajradhara, is seated in the *vīrāsana* pose; his right hand balancing a *vajra* on his breast, while his left hand, holding a *ghaṇṭā*, is placed on his thigh. The figure is comparatively rare in Bengal and thus has a great deal of iconographic interest.[2]

Numerous images of Avalokiteśvara of different varieties, such as Khasarpaṇa (both standing and seated), Sugati-sandarśana, Shaḍaksharī *etc.* are known in Bengal, of which a few alone can be noted here. The seated image of Khasarpaṇa, inscribed with the Buddhist creed in characters of the 11th century A.D., found at Mahākālī (Dacca) is one of the finest specimens of such figures discovered in Northern India (Pl. XX. 50). The god is seated in *lalitāsana*, underneath a trefoil arch on a double-petalled lotus carved on a *saptaratha* pedestal, on which are shown various accessory

[1] Bhatt.-*Cat.* 30-31, Pl. VIII.

[2] *Ibid.* 22-23, Pl. III (*a*). A separate image of the Dhyānī-Buddha Ratnasambhava is in the collection of the Rajshahi Museum. This unique image hails from Vikrampur.

figures like Sūchīmukha, the donor couple, some of the *upachāras* and *ratnas,* a female figure dancing to the tune of musical instruments played by others, *etc.* The tastefully decorated central figure, holding a full-blossomed lotus flower by its stalk in its left hand (its right hand is broken), looks down with compassionate eyes (*cf.* the epithets *parama-karuṇa* and *avalokita*). The usual attendants of the lord, *viz.* Sudhanakumāra and Tārā on the right, and Hayagrīva and Bhṛikuṭī on the left, are artistically placed on subsidiary lotuses by his side, while on the top section of the *prabhāvalī* are carved the images of the Pañcha-Tathāgatas, each shown in his characteristic pose enshrined in miniature temples, and other accessories. The artist had poured his whole soul into his work and turned out one of the noblest objects of religious art in Bengal.[1] The standing figure of the same variety of Lokeśvara (Pl. xx. 51), with most of the accessory figures noticed above present in its *prabhāvalī,* hailing from Chowrāpārā (Rajshahi), is somewhat later in date (*c.* 12th century A.D.).[2] There is a rare variety of Lokeśvara image, probably to be identified as Sugati-sandar-śana Lokeśvara, of the 12th or 13th century A.D., in the Rajshahi Museum. The image is a six-handed one, five of its hands holding manuscript, *pāśa, tridaṇḍī* (or *triśūla*), *akshamālā,* and *kamaṇḍalu,* the remaining hand showing the *varada* pose. Another interesting variety of Avalokiteśvara, correctly to be designated as Shaḍaksharī Lokeśvara on account of its iconographic features, hailing from Rānipur (Maldah) is now in the Maldah Museum (Pl. XXII. 56). The central figure is that of a four-handed Avalokiteśvara seated in the *vajra-paryaṅka āsana* with his front hands in the *añjali* pose the back right and left hands holding respectively a rosary and a lotus. The image is tastefully decorated with a *jaṭā-mukuṭa* and usual ornaments, and has the miniature figure of Maṇidhara on its right and that of Shaḍaksharī Mahāvidyā on its left. The relief, may be dated in the latter part of the 11th century A.D. Such types of Lokeśvara figures are comparatively rare, only a few specimens having been discovered in Bengal.

A very sadly mutilated image from Ghiyāsābād (Murshidabad), now in the Indian Museum[3] (Pl. XXI. 53), possesses great iconographic interest. The top part of the *prabhāvalī* (with practically the whole of the head of the figure) and the pedestal are gone, but whatever is left of the image enables us to describe it as follows. The figure standing in the *samapāda-sthānaka* pose, with remnants

[1] Bhatt.-*Cat.* 27-28, Pl. VII (*a*).

[2] *ASI.* 1930-34, p. 262-63, Pl. CXXXI (*b*).

[3] *EISMS.* 94-95, Pl. XXXVIII (*c*).

of snake-hoods behind its head, is endowed with twelve hands the discernible attributes of which are : a Garuḍa, a rat, a ploughshare, a conch-shell (on the left hand), a manuscript (?), a bull, and a cup (?) (on the right ones), all placed on double-petalled lotuses or *nīlotpalas* which are held by their stalks in the respective hands. It is decorated with the usual ornaments, a loin cloth, and a long garland (like *vanamālā* or *vaijayantī* of Vishṇu images) reaching below the knee. One hand on either side is placed on two attendant figures, just as two of the four-handed Vishṇu images are placed on the attendant *āyudha-purushas,* though the figures on this relief can not be identified as such. The above description shows some Vishṇuite affinities of the sculpture. The reason for placing it among the Lokeśvara group of Mahāyāna icons of Bengal is the fact that an exactly similar piece, now in the Rajshahi Museum, shows the *preta* Sūchīmukha, one of the almost invariable attendants of Avalokiteśvara, on its pedestal. Unfortunately, the top sections of the *prabhāvalī* of both these sculptures are broken, and so we are not in a position to determine whether there were the miniatures of Amitābha or all the five Dhyānī-Buddhas above. Even if the image be some form of Lokeśvara, it shows clear Vishṇuite tendencies. As already noted above (*supra* pp. 433-34) some Vaishṇava icons of Bengal show undoubted Mahāyāna influence.[1]

The gold-plated Mañjuśrī of Mahāsthān has already been referred to above (*supra* p. 466). We shall now briefly describe one or two other varieties of this Mahāyāna divinity, the emanation of Tathāgata Akshobhya. A beautiful figure of two-handed Mañjuvara found at Talanda (Rajshahi), one among a few such icons in the Rajshahi Museum (Pl. XXII. 57), is shown seated in the *lalitāsana* on the back of a conventional lion which is roaring with its upturned

[1] A very interesting comparison can be made between these two twelve-armed figures with a similar one hailing from Sonārang and now in the VSP. Museum, Calcutta [cf. *EISMS.* 95, Pl. XXXVIII(*d*); *VSP-Cat.* 32-33, Pl. VII]. The latter is well preserved and bears a great deal of similarity to the former; besides the figure of Amitābha is distinct over the snake-hood canopy. All these figures thus represent the same deity, *viz.* Avalokiteśvara, with Vishṇuite affinities. The six-handed Sāgardīghi bronze figure in the VSP. museum (*VSP-Cat.* 139, Pl. XXVI; *EISMS.* 96, Pl. XXXVIII-*b*) represents a male deity standing under a canopy of seven three-headed *nāgas*; it is endowed with one head and six hands. Though the figure of Amitābha is absent on the top, still it is very similar to the Sonārang relief in respect to the attributes in its hands, as well as the attending male figures. The date of this sculpture can be fixed on the basis of an inscription on its back, as well as on stylistic grounds, in the 11th century A.D. R. D. Banerji observes, "This particular class of specimens, therefore, indicates a blending of the older Bhāgavata class of Vaishṇava images and the Lokeśvaras of the later Mahāyāna school of Buddhism" (*EISMS.* 96).

face. The central figure is tastefully decorated with the usual ornaments, the *mukuṭa* being of the *karaṇḍa* variety. The hands are shown in the *dharmachakra-mudrā* against the breast, and a book is placed on a full-blosomed lotus flower which is held by its stalk in its left arm. A part of the top section of the *prabhāvalī* is broken, but we can discern the miniature figure of Amitābha on the left, and evidently one of Akshobhya was in the centre. It is a well-carved piece of sculpture and can be dated in the 11th or 12th century A.D. Another variety of the same deity, found at Jālkuṇḍī (Dacca), portrays his Arapachana form (Pl. XXII. 58) which is not so widely represented. The god is seated in the *vajra-paryaṅka* pose on a double-petalled lotus supported by two Nāgas; he is two-handed, the right forearm, carrying the sword, is missing, and his left hand, holding a manuscript, is placed against his breast. Four miniature replicas of him, known as Jālinī, Upakeśinī, Sūryaprabhā and Chandraprabhā are shown, one on the top centre, and three others below and on the two sides of the seat. There are four miniature figures of Vairochana, Akshobhya, Amitābha and Ratnasambhava on the top section of the *prabhāvalī*. The figure may be dated approximately in the first half of the 12th century A.D.[1] The Vaṅgīya Sāhitya Parishat image of Sthirachakra, discovered at Maldah, is another unique variety of this deity. His right hand is shown in the *varada* pose, while his left holds the stalk of a lotus on which rest a book and a sword.

Among the other subsidiary Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna divinities, mention may be made of Jambhala, usually associated with Ratnasambhava and Heruka, an emanation of Akshobhya. Jambhala is the Buddhist counterpart of Brahmanical Kuvera, the god of riches and the king of the Yakshas. Kuvera and his consort Hāritī, both typifying wealth and abundance, were venerated in India from a very early period, and their figures with Buddhist association have been discovered, in large numbers, specially in the north-western part of India, among Gandhāra sculptures. One composite relief of the 12th century A.D., hailing from Deopārā (Rajshahi) and now in the Rajshahi Museum, shows a male and a female figure in *lalitāsana* on a *viśvapadma*, their right hands holding *vījapūrakas*, and the left, a seated child in each case. In the middle of the *pañcharatha* pedestal squat four children, and a pair of donors, one being on each side. These two figures have been described by Stella Kramrisch as Hāritī and Vaiśravaṇa (Kuvera), though she is

[1] Bhatt.-*Cat.* 28-29, Pl. VII(*b*).

doubtful about her suggestion.[1] Neither is the male figure characterised by a pot-belly and squat dwarfish features which are the peculiarities of Jambhala, nor are upturned coin-jars shown below the leg hanging down the seat. The Jambhala figures found in Bengal show all these characteristics, and are invariably depicted as pressing with their left hands the neck of a mungoose vomitting jewels, while their right hands hold a *vījapūraka* in almost the same fashion as the male figure in the composite relief, just noticed, does. We can refer to two typically representative specimens of Jambhala, one (11th century A.D.) found at Vikrampur (Pl. LXV. 158), and the other (12th century A.D.) in the Rajshahi Museum, originally found at Dhurail (Rajshahi). Both these are very fine pieces of sculpture and are similar as regards their main iconographic details. These deities had a popular appeal and their worshippers were large in number. Compared with the frequent discoveries of these figures in Bengal and Eastern India, the extreme paucity of the other subsidiary deity, *viz.* Heruka is remarkable. A unique specimen in black chlorite, hailing from Baḍ-kāmtā, (Tippera) and now in the Dacca Museum, is one of the few found in this province (Pl. XXIII. 59). It is vigorously carved on a plain stela with flames issuing out of its border. The figure is shown dancing in an ecstatic pose, and decorated with a long garland of skulls and other ornaments. Its two hands are broken, but enough remains to show that it held a *kapāla* in its left and a *vajra* in its right. There is a long *khaṭvāṅga* placed along its left shoulder, and it bears an effigy of Akshobhya among its flaming *jaṭās* arranged in tiers. This Tāntric Buddhist icon can be dated in the 11th century A.D.[2] A very rare specimen of a variety of Heruka, hailing from North Bengal, is now in the Indian Museum. Its elaborate iconographic details justify its identification as Sambara, and it probably belongs to the 12th century A.D. (Pl. XXI. 55).[3]

Another deity, Hevajra, was evolved during the latest phase of Buddhism, and occupies an important position in the Tibetan Buddhist pantheon. A fine and well-preserved image of this god in *yab-yum* attitude with its Śakti, found at Murshidabad, is now in possession of Mr. P. S. Nahar of Calcutta (Pl. XXI. 54). A similar image, partly damaged, was found at Pāhārpur. The deity has eight heads, and sixteen hands, which hold skull-caps containing

[1] Kramrisch, "Pāla and Sena Sculpture," *Rūpam*, No. 40, fig. 52.

[2] Bhatt.-*Cat.* 87, Pl. XII. An interesting sculpture in the collection of the Rajshahi Museum, hailing from Vikrampur, represents the less known Vajrayāna deity Krishṇa-Yamāri.

[3] *ASI.* 1934-35, p. 79, Pl. XXIV(c).

different animals and deities. Miniature dancing figures are carved round the central pair and beneath them are a number of corpses. A similar image of Hevajra, without the Śakti, has been discovered in the Dharmanagar Sub-division of the Tripura State.[1]

As Bengal is the homeland of the Śakti cult, it is not surprising that so many female deities associated with Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna would be discovered here. Figures of Tārā of different varieties, Prajñāpāramitā, Mārīchī, Parṇaśavarī, Chuṇḍā, Hāritī *etc.* are well represented in the collections of the different local museums. It is possible here to take note only of a very few of them. One of the most interesting iconographic types is the goddess Mārīchī, an emanation of the Dhyānī-Buddha Vairochana. She is usually depicted with three faces, the left one being that of a sow, eight hands holding *vajra, aṅkuśa, śara, aśoka* leaf, *sūchī, dhanu* and *pāśa* (the other hand being in the *tarjanī* pose), with the figure of her spiritual father in her head-dress, and riding in *pratyālīḍha* pose on a chariot drawn by seven pigs, driven by the charioteer Rāhu. She is also generally accompanied by four other subsidiary goddesses, *viz.* Varttālī, Vadālī, Varāli and Varāhamukhī. Her Brahmanical counterpart, though in male aspect, is Sūrya. The details of the Dacca Museum specimen, hailing from Ujāni (Faridpur) and datable in the 11th or 12th century A.D., correspond to most of those noticed above (Pl. XXVII. 65).[2] Icons of Prajñāpāramitā, typifying the spirit of divine wisdom, are rarely found in Bengal (cf. Maldah Museum specimen, Pl. XXVI. 62). Very often this goddess is painted in bright and variegated colours on the covers of the Prajñāpāramitā manuscripts locally procured. She is shown seated in *padmāsana* in deep tranquility of wisdom, both of her hands placed against her breast, the right in the *vyākhyāna*, and the left in the *jñāna-mudrā* holding the book *Ashṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā.*

Of the several varieties of Tārā, emanations of different Dhyānī-Buddhas, well represented in the local museums, mention may be made of Khadiravanī-Tārā, Vajra-Tārā and Bhṛikuṭī-Tārā, respective emanations of Amoghasiddhi, Ratnasambhava and Amitābha. Khadiravanī, known also as Śyāma-Tārā on account of her green colour, is one of the commonest varieties of such images (Pl. LXV. 156; Pl. LXVI, 160). She may be depicted seated or standing, holding a blue lotus in her hand, and usually accompanied by Aśokakāntā (Mārīchī) and Ekajaṭā. An elaborately carved image of this variety of Tārā, datable in the 12th century A.D., and found at

[1] *Paharpur.* 55, Pl. XXXVIII (c); *ASI.* 1927-28, p. 185, Pl. XLIX (a, f).
[2] Bhatt.-*Cat.* 43-44, Pl. XIII (b).

Sompārā (Dacca) is now in the Dacca Museum. It is in a fairly well-preserved condition and has the additional iconographic interest of having eight miniature figures of Tārā on the *prabhāvalī* (four on each side), and the figure of Vajrasattva on the extreme right corner of the pedestal.[1] A partially preserved metal image of Vajra-Tārā (Tāra of the yellow colour) in the same museum, originally hailing from Mājvāḍī (Faridpur) is of unique importance (Pl. XXIV-XXV *60-61*); for, so far as it is preserved, it closely resembles the metal image of the same deity in the shape of an eight-petalled lotus flower, enclosing within its petals the goddess with the figures of the eight attendants carved on the insides of the petals, originally found at Chandipur (Bhagalpur) and now in the Indian Museum.[2] The image of a three-headed and eight-handed goddess seated in the *vīrāsana* pose, with Gaṇeśa carved on the pedestal and Amitābha in its crown, discovered at Bhavānipur (Dacca) and now in the Dacca Sāhitya Parishat (Pl. XXVI. 63), is a very interesting piece of sculpture both from the artistic and iconographic points of view. Bhattasali thinks that it may represent a hitherto unknown form of Bhṛikuṭī-Tārā, but no *sādhanā* describing this variety of Tārā fits in with the details of this figure which can be dated in the 10th century A.D. There is a great deal of resemblance between this figure and the unique image of a goddess tentatively identified as Mahāpratisarā, a goddess of the *Pañcharakshā-maṇḍala*, in the Dacca Museum. Both these sculptures are beautiful specimens of Pāla art in Bengal, and the latter may be approximately dated in the 11th century A.D.[3] The metal image of an eight-handed goddess, described as Sitātapatrā on insufficient data, originally found in Tippera and now in the Dacca Museum, is an extremely rare icon (Pl. LXIII. 152). It is a very beautiful work of art and may be dated in the 9th century A.D.[4] The recent acquisition by the Rajshahi Museum of an eighteen-armed female deity (Pl. XXVI. 64), representing in all probability the rare Buddhist goddess Chuṇḍā, from Niyāmatpur (Rajshahi), and datable in the 9th century A.D., is of great importance to students of Bengal iconography. A Foucher[5] refers to a sixteen-armed figure of Chundā installed in the Chundā-vara-bhavana at Paṭṭikerā (Tippera). This new find proves further that the

[1] Bhatt.-*Cat.* 56-57, Pl. XXI.

[2] *Ibid.* 45-53, Pl. XV-XVII.

[3] *Ibid.* 54-56, Pl. XIX and pp. 61-62, Pl. XXIV. B. T. Bhattacharya describes both these figures as Mahāpratisarā in his *Indian Buddhist Iconography*, pp. 116-17, Pl. XXXV(*b*) and (*c*).

[4] Bhatt.-*Cat.* 53-54, Pl. XVIII.

[5] Foucher-*Icon.* 145, 199 (No. 51), fig. 25; Pl. VIII. 4.

worship of this goddess was also in vogue in North Bengal.[1] The two figures of three-headed and six-handed Parṇaśavarī from Vikrampur (Dacca) are identical with each other in every respect from the iconographic point of view (Pl. XXVII. 67). The attributes held in the hands (*vajra, paraśu* and *śara* in the right, and *tarjanī, dhanu* and *parṇapichchhika* in the left ones), the number of faces, the leaf-garment *etc.* all closely correspond to the description of this goddess given in the texts.[2] Of the miniature figures of the five Dhyānī-Buddhas on the top section of the *prabhāvalī*, the central one just above the head of the goddess is that of Amoghasiddhi, thus emphasising its association with Parṇaśavarī. Her name, some of the iconographic features such as the leaf-garment, and the characteristic epithet *piśāchī* applied to her in the *dhyāna-mantra* indicate the Śavara tribe as the source from which she was adopted in the later Buddhist pantheon. The Vajrayāna goddess Vāgīśvarī is well represented in Bengal, both in stone and bronze; there are several varieties known of which a good specimen is illustrated in Pl. XXVII. 66.

Such is in brief the history of the development of the iconoplastic art in Bengal. The skill and energy of the local artists were mostly employed in fashioning the bewildering varieties of hieratic images and their accessories, religion thus playing a dominant part in their activities. It might have cramped, to a certain extent, the free grace and naïve simplicity of their earlier efforts, but the task in which the artists were engaged was seldom done in a half-hearted manner. Some of these works, in spite of their being hide-bound by the canonical rules, were exceedingly good specimens of art, and the ideas underlying many of them were portrayed with a great deal of earnestness and emphasis. The iconoplastic art, like other branches of art, has to be judged from the standpoint of its motive. It should never be said to the detriment of many of the long forgotten anonymous artists of Bengal, that they did not understand the nature of the work which was expected from them, or, that they were not alive to the real and primary purpose of their work,—which was not to create so many museum specimens to be judged chiefly for their artistic merits or demerits by the modern art connoisseurs, but to serve as definite concrete aids to the religious efforts (*sādhanas*) of the innumerable devotees (*bhaktas*) of ancient times. At the same time no impartial art-critic could fail to recognise among the numerous images of Bengal many noble and strikingly artistic pieces of sculpture.

[1] *VRS-Rep.* 1936-38, pp. 29-30, fig. 6.

[2] Bhatt.-*Cat.* 58-61, Pl. XXIII (*a*) and (*b*).

GLOSSARY

[For a full discussion of iconographic terminologies cf. Rao-*Icon.* and Banerjea-*Icon.* Ch. VII].

Ābhaṅga—a standing pose with a slight bend in the figure.

Abhaya-mudrā—The different poses of the hands of the deities indicating different ideas or attitude of mind are technically known as *mudrā.* The more important of these *mudrās* are :—

(1) Abhaya (assurance)—in which the hand, with fingers raised upwards, is turned to front.

(2) Bhūsparśa (touching the earth)—in which the left hand rests on the lap with palm outward, and the right touches the seat below. (for the significance of this *mudrā,* cf. Banerjea-*Icon.* 286).

(3) Dharmachakra—in which Buddha's hands are depicted as preaching the law. It is a combination of *jñāna-* and *vyākhyāna-mudrās,* the left hand being in the former and the right in the latter poses (for full significance cf. Banerjea-*Icon.* 279).

(4) Dhyāna (meditation)—in which the palm of the right hand is put in that of the left hand, and both are placed together on the crossed legs of the seated image.

(5) Jñāna (knowledge)—in which 'the tips of the middle finger and of the thumb are joined together and held near the heart, with the palm of the hand turned towards the heart' (Rao).

(6) Sūchī—in which the index-finger is stretched out, the other fingers being bent, and the hand is usually held down.

(7) Varada (conferring boon)—in which the hand is held down with palm outwards.

(8) Vitarka (discussion) or Vyākhyāna (explanation) —in which 'the tips of the thumb and the fore-finger are made to touch each other. The palm of the hand is made to face the front' (Rao).

Akshamālā—rosary.

Ālīḍha—a mode of standing, in which the right knee is thrown to front and the leg retracted, while the left leg is firmly planted behind, in a slanting position.

Aṅgada—Armlet.

Aṅkuśa—Elephant-goad.

Apsmāra-purusha—the evil demon trampled on by Śiva, especially in his Naṭarāja aspect; the demon's other name is Mūyaḷaka.

Arghya—the *pīṭha* or the circular base into which the Śiva-*liṅga* is inserted.

Atibhaṅga—an emphasised form of *tribhaṅga*, the sweep of the curve being considerably enhanced.

Bhadraghaṭa—auspicious pitcher.

Bhṛiṅgāra—narrow-necked water-pot with a spout.

Bhūsparśa—See Abhaya.

Chakra—discus held by Vishṇu and sometimes by divinities associated with him.

Chhannavīra—a kind of jewelled disc worn in front of the breast; it is kept in position by two chains or pearl strings placed crosswise on the torso.

Ḍamaru—a kettle-drum sounded by moving it in the hand.

Daṇḍa—a staff or cudgel.

Dhanu—bow.

Dhyāna-mudrā—See Abhaya.

Dvibhaṅga—a standing pose in which the body has one bend in the middle.

Gadā—mace, club.

Gaṇa—An impish attendant of Śiva.

Ghaṇṭā—bell.

Hāra—necklace.

Jaṭā—matted locks of hair.

Jaṭā-mukuṭa—a sort of crown made up by arranging the matted locks of hair in a particular manner.

Jñāna-mudrā—See Abhaya.

Kamaṇḍalu—a water-pot of a peculiar shape, with a handle and a spout.

Kapāla—upper part of the skull shown as a cup in the hands of deities of terrific aspect.

Karaṇḍa—a particular kind of conical crown, placed usually on the heads of subordinate deities.

Karatāla—clapping of the hands marking time with music.

Kartṛi—a short chopper, a big knife.

Kāyotsarga—a standing pose usually shown in Jina images, in which the hands hang down straight along the side of the stiffly erect body.

Keyūra—an armlet, an ornament of the upper-arm.

Khaḍga—a sword.

Khaṭvāṅga—' a curious sort of club, made up of the bone of the fore-arm or the leg, to the end of which a human skull is attached through its foramen' (Rao).

Kirīṭa—a jewelled head-gear.

Kirīṭa-mukuṭa—a conical crown.

Kīrtimukha—the grinning lion-face shown usually on the top centre of the stela.

Kuṇḍala—ear-ring.

Lalitāsana—a sitting posture, in which one leg, usually the left leg, is tucked up on the seat, while the right one dangles down along it.

Lāñchhana—cognisance, mark.

Mahārāja-līlā—a sitting posture, also known as *Sukhāsana*, where one leg (generally the left one) rests on the seat, while the right knee is raised upwards on the seat and the right arm rests on the raised knee.

Mātuluṅga—a citron.

Mudgara—a pestle.

Mudrā—hand-pose (see Abhaya).

Nāga—snake, also a peculiar hybrid figure made up of human and serpentine forms.

Nāgapāśa—a snake in its real shape used as a noose.

Nāginī—female snake.

Nāla—the projecting part of the base of Śiva-liṅga for draining the water poured on its top.

Navaratha—a type of pedestal with nine facets.

Nīlotpala—blue lotus.

Padma—lotus.

Padmāsana—(1) lotus seat; (2) a sitting posture in which 'the two legs are kept crossed so that the feet are brought to rest on the thighs' (Rao).

Paraśu—a battle-axe.

Pañcharatha—a type of pedestal with five facets.

Parṇapichchhikā—the feathers of a peacock's tail tied in a bunch.

Pāśa—a noose.

Prabhāvalī—the stela or background of an image.

Pratyālīḍha—standing pose, just the reverse of *ālīḍha* (see *ālīḍha).*

Pūjābhāga—the top section of the *liṅga* which is shown out of its base.

Ratna—jewel.

Śakti—(1) consort; (2) a spear.

Samapāda-sthānaka—a standing posture, in which the body, without any bend in it, faces front.

Śaṅkha—(1) a conch-shell; (2) one of the *nidhis* or treasures of Kuvera-Vaiśravaṇa.

Saptaratha—a type of pedestal with seven facets.

Śara—an arrow.

Sarpa—a snake.

Śiraśchakra—the halo or nimbus behind the head of an image.

Sruk—sacrificial ladle for taking out clarified butter from the pot.

Sūchī—needle.

Sūchī-mudrā—see Abhaya.

Sruva—a sacrificial ladle for pouring clarified butter on the fire.

Sukhāsana—a comfortable sitting posture, same as *mahārāja-līlā* (see *Mahārāja-līlā*).

Ṭaṅka—a stone-mason's chisel.

Śūla—trident.

Tarjanī—(1) index-finger; (2) a kind of hand-pose, in which the index-finger of the upraised hand is stretched out upwards, while the other fingers are bent.

Tribhaṅga—a standing pose with two bends in the body.

Tridaṇḍī—a wooden staff with three prong-like projections.

Triratha—a type of pedestal with three facets.

Triśūla—trident.

Upachāra—offerings necessary in worshipping a deity.

Upavītī (fashion)—running across the chest from above the left shoulder below the right arm-pit, as the sacred thread is usually worn.

Ūrṇā—the hairy mole between the two eye-brows, usually shown on the heads of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

Vaijayantī—a long flower garland usually shown on Vishṇu images.

Vaiśākha-sthānaka—standing on the back of the bull.

Vajra—thunder-bolt.

Vanamālā—a long flower-garland usually shown on Vishṇu figures.

Varada-mudrā—see Abhaya.

Vījapura—a citron.

Vīṇā—a stringed musical instrument of the type of lyre.

Vīrāsana—a sitting posture in which the left foot rests upon the right thigh and the left thigh on the right foot.

Viśvapadma—a double-petalled lotus, the upper set of petals usually pointing upwards and the lower set drooping down.

Vitarka-mudrā—See Abhaya.

Vyākhyāna-mudrā—See Abhaya.

Yajñopavīta—sacred thread worn by Brahmins.

CHAPTER XIV

ARCHITECTURE, SCULPTURE, PAINTING

I. ARCHITECTURE

I. INTRODUCTION.

IN dealing with the architecture of Bengal before A.D. 1200, one is at the very outset confronted with an utter scarcity of material all through the period. The fact is rather intriguing, as abundant evidences, both internal and external, testify to the existence in Bengal of every kind of edifice, characteristic of other parts of ancient India. Numerous inscriptions of the province, dating from the Gupta period, refer to temples and monasteries, while flourishing cities, with magnificent palaces, temples, and monasteries are referred to in literary works. Fa-hien in the 5th century A.D.[1] and Hiuen Tsang in the 7th[2] saw a large number of monasteries, temples and *stūpas* in different parts of Bengal. Later, inscriptions often describe a temple as 'ornament of the earth' (*bhū-bhūshaṇaḥ*),[3] as 'high as mountain peaks,' or as 'obstructing the very course of the sun with its lofty and imposing towers capped by golden *kalasas*'.[4] That some of the sanctuaries in Bengal had attained special celebrity as early as the 10th century A.D. is also known from their illustrations in two Buddhist manuscripts (MS. Add. 1643, Cambridge, and MS. A. 15, Calcutta) of Nepal copied respectively in 1015 and 1071 A.D.[5]

But not one of these early monuments now exists, and the only memorials of ancient times consist of jungle-clad mounds scattered throughout the province and a few stray temples in West Bengal, belonging to a comparatively late period, which have fortunately escaped utter dilapidation. A cause for this almost total obliteration may be sought for not only in the soft alluvial formation of the land and its damp climate, but also in the building materials. These last were usually mud, bamboo, reeds, wood and such other fragile but indigenous products. Even in the more pretentious

[1] Fa-hien, p. 100. [2] Watters, II. 184-85, 187, 190, 191.
[3] *JASB*. N. S. VIII 615-19.
[4] *IB*. 48-49. Cf. the verses describing the achievements of Rājyapāla in *GL*. 97.
[5] Foucher-*Icon*. 16-17, 28.

buildings the usual medium was brick, certainly a much less durable material than stone which is not easily available in the province. A brick structure, not to speak of the buildings in more perishable materials, cannot be expected to resist for long the effects of damp and relaxing climate, the excessive rainfall, and the luxuriant vegetation of the country. Along with this natural cause there was also the human element, and many monuments that might have escaped decay because of the more durable nature of their materials were deliberately razed to the ground by foreign invaders, either on account of their iconoclastic zeal or for securing building materials, with which to construct or decorate their own structures. Instances are not rare where earlier structures were thus utilised, with but little transformations, as we have an example in the tomb of Jafar Khān Ghāzi at Triveṇī in Hooghly.

It is thus evident that the historian of the architecture of Bengal has but very little material at his disposal. The few standing edifices and the ruined vestiges, brought to light in recent explorations, are too fragmentary to be of much real use for a history of architecture, properly so called. All that is possible to do is to piece together every bit of information from other sources, such for example as sculpture, manuscript-painting and extant monuments elsewhere, in order to reconstruct the forms and features of the lost monuments of the province. These materials are not, however, adequate for the purpose of writing a complete and systematic history, with a thorough treatment of the origin and evolution of the different architectural types and forms. It should further be noted that the little knowledge that we possess relates almost entirely to religious buildings and we have no knowledge of the secular architecture of the province. In Bengal, as in the rest of India, there was always a tendency to use more permanent materials for religious edifices, and thus the early monuments that have survived, or of which we have got vestiges now, almost exclusively belong to religious establishments of one or other denomination.

II. Stūpa Architecture

The most important of early Indian architectural forms is the *stūpa.* The custom of rearing up *stūpas* appears to be pre-Buddhistic, and probably it had its analogue in the Vedic practice of raising earthen funeral mounds (*śmaśāna*), in which were deposited the bones of the dead. But it is the Buddhists who particularly selected and adapted it to their own use. They utilised it at first for enshrining the relics (*dhātu*) of the Master or of his

chief disciples. The relics were of three kinds—*Śārīra-dhātu* (corporeal relics), *Paribhogika-dhātu* (relics used by the Master) and *Niddesika-dhātu* (indicative relics). The *stūpa* had also a commemorative character, being erected as memorials in places, specially sacred in the life of the Buddha or in his legend. Ultimately, as enshrining the relic and as symbolising the Master Himself the *stūpa* itself came to be regarded as an object of veneration and worship. In later times *stūpas* were erected in sacred Buddhist sites as a pious work, the gift of a *stūpa* being reckoned as meritorious as that of an image, if not more.[1]

Wherever Buddhism has flourished it has left its visible traces in the form of such structural monuments, which, though varying in details and elaboration in different countries, may be traced to have evolved out of a simple hemispherical dome on a circular base, characteristic of the early *stūpas,* now extant. Such a *stūpa* consisted of a solid domical structure, placed on a low circular base. On the top of the dome there was a square capital in the form of a box *(harmikā),* which was surmounted by a round disc (literally *chhatra,* umbrella, the emblem of universal dignity). Soon there grew up a tendency towards elongation and height, and, as we proceed, we find that the circular base is transformed into a solid cylinder (literally known as the 'drum,' *medhi,* in distinction to the hemispherical dome known as the *aṇḍa*), which gradually increases in height. Later on, the whole structure is raised on a square plinth, sometimes with a projection or two on each face. The crowning member, literally the *chhatra* (parasol), originally one, gradually increases in number in a tapering row of flat discs, the topmost one usually ending in a point. Side by side with such additions of different elements there was also a corresponding elevation of each component part. The whole composition thus attains a spirelike shape, in which the original hemispherical dome loses its dominating importance, being cramped into an insignificant element in between the lofty basement and the drum and the series of *chhatrāvalī,* that has already been transformed into a high and conical architectural

[1] Originally as sheltering the corporeal remains of the Buddha, the *stūpa* in early Buddhist art stood for his *parinirvāṇa* or even for the Master Himself, like so many other symbols, as the Footprints, the Bodhi Tree, the Wheel, the Vajrāsana, *etc.* As such it was held in great veneration, and, we have frequent representations at Bhārhut, Sānchī, Amarāvatī, *etc.* of devotees coming to worship, or actually worshipping, the *stūpa.* The *chaitya*-hall is nothing but the shrine-chamber, where the votive *stūpa* or *chaitya* occupied the place of the altar. The worship of the *stūpa* does not appear to have died out with the evolution and introduction of the image of the deified teacher, and the subsequent offerings of such edifices are quite frequent and common in flourishing Buddhist establishments.

motif. The few remains of *stūpa* monuments in Bengal belong to this late stage of evolution.

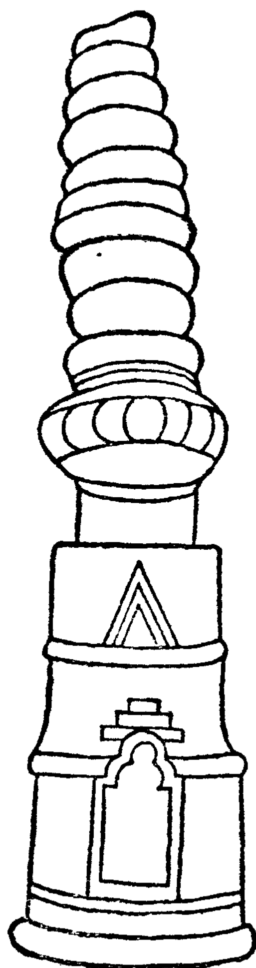
The *stūpas*, it has already been observed, may be divided into three classes with reference to the objects for which they were raised: (1) the Relic *stūpa*, (2) the Commemorative or the Memorial *stūpa* and (3) the Votive *stūpa*. We have as yet no evidence that the first kind, the relic *stūpa*, existed in Bengal. As regards the second, Hiuen Tsang tells us that he saw several in different parts of Bengal, said to have been built by the great Aśoka himself to commemorate the holy sites where Gautama Buddha was reported to have preached his doctrine in person.[1] The tradition of the Buddha's visit to Bengal is also preserved in the story of Sumāgadhā in the *Avadāna-kalpalatā* of Kshemendra (11th century A.D.).[2] But both the traditions are comparatively late and, true to the legend that Aśoka built 84,000 *stūpas*, it was almost a convention to connect him with a *stūpa*, whatever its date and location might be. It is, therefore, difficult to believe that the *stūpas*, noticed by Hiuen Tsang, in different parts of Bengal, were built by Aśokarāja, until we get more definite evidence. His accounts only prove that there were several memorial *stūpas* in Bengal in his time. But none of them can now be traced with certainty.

The third class, the votive *stūpa*, though not so prolific as in the adjoining province of Bihar, was not a rare feature in Bengal, and several examples in bronze and stone and numerous specimens in brick are known. Though the first two kinds do not strictly fall within the province of architecture, they are important as supplying us with the form and features of such structural edifices and hence cannot be left out of account. A detailed study of the available examples shows that there is but little difference in their form and composition, and a close agreement with the mediaeval stone prototypes in Bihar may be recognised. A bronze votive *stūpa*, found at Ashrafpur (Dacca) along with two copper-plates of king Devakhaḍga, (7th century A.D.;—*supra* p. 87), appears to be the earliest in this group, while the latest, so far as style is concerned, is a stone specimen, now enshrined at Jogi-gophā in the Dinajpur district.

The bronze votive *stūpa* from Ashrafpur (Pl. XXVIII, 68)[3] is a fairly preserved specimen and consists of a cylindrical drum and hemispherical dome supported on a lotus over a high and slightly sloping basement, which is square with one offset projection on each face. The dome bulges a little towards the top—a peculiarity that

[1] Watters, II. 185, 187, 190, 191.
[2] *Avadāna-kalpalatā* (Sanskrit Sāhitya Parishat ed.), p. 94.
[3] *Proc. ASB.* 1891, pp. 119-120, Pl. III; *EISMS.* Pl. LXXV, 6.

endows the form with a contour not unlike that of the 'bell-shaped' *stūpas* of Burma. Above the square *harmikā* rises the shaft of *chhatrāvalī*, of which only one disc now remains. Like the stone prototypes in Bihar the basement and the drum are adorned with figures. What is, however, unique in this specimen is that the square turret of the *harmikā* has each of its sides adorned with a figure of the Buddha, a peculiarity which, so far as our knowledge goes, is not met with elsewhere. At least two other bronze *stūpas* are known from Bengal—one from Pāhārpur (Rajshahi)[1] and the other from Jhewāri (Chittagong).[2] Each of these two consists of a bulging dome on a cruciform basement, as in the mediaeval stone examples from Bihar. The Pāhārpur specimen exhibits four concentric rings just below the dome in the section usually occupied by the drum (*cf.* three similar rings in the *stūpas* of Ceylon). Streamers in ornamental design are also attached to the shaft of the *chhatras*. Relief representations of *stūpas* of exactly similar design may also be found in the stelae of Buddhist images found in Bengal (*cf.* Tārā from Dhondai; Pl. LXVI, 160).

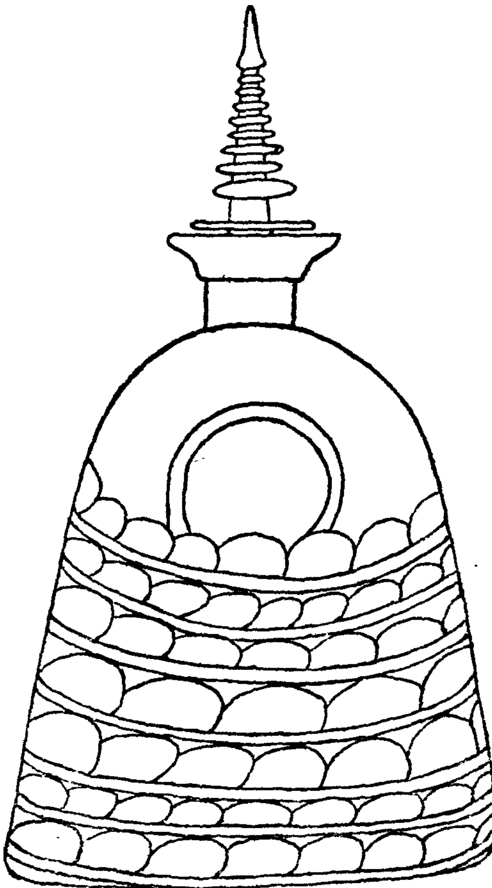


The only stone specimen of a votive *stūpa*, so far known in Bengal, is now enshrined at Jogi-gophā and looks at first sight quite unlike a *stūpa*[3] (See sketch). A close examination, however, reveals that it was probably an ultimate transformation of a hemispherical structure due to an excessive tendency towards elevation and elongation. Along with the multiplication of the different elements there was also a corresponding elevation of each component part, and here, even without the basement that is lost, we find that the drum and the dome each represents a high cylinder, their total height being more than three times the diameter at the bottom. The drum, as usual, is ornamented with four figures in niches, while the plain dome is surmounted by the *harmikā*, not square but circular and ribbed on

[1] *Paharpur*. Pl. LVIII (*d*).
[2] S. K. Saraswati, *JL*. XXIX. 4, Pl. II.
[3] *ASI*. 1927-28, p. 184.

edge, just like the *āmalaka-śilā* of a temple. This is a peculiarity which is noticed here for the first time in case of a *stūpa* monument. Next we have the range of *chhatra* discs, gradually diminishing in size as they go up. The sense of accentuated height is strongly manifest in the whole composition, which gives to this particular specimen almost the appearance of a miniature obelisk, though with a round contour.

There is not a single structural example of a *stūpa* in Bengal with its upper members intact, but there are representations of at least three well-known *stūpa* monuments in Bengal in the Buddhist manuscripts referred to above (*supra* p. 480). The earliest in point of date is the Mṛigasthāpana-*stūpa* in Varendra illustrated in MS. Add. 1643, Cambridge (dated 1015 A.D.)[1] which, as noted above (*supra* p. 69), existed as early as the 7th century A.D., and is referred to by I-tsing. It shows a low circular drum over a basement consisting of six terraces, each of which is in the form of a lotus. The semi-circular dome, with four niches on four sides containing Buddha figures, is decorated with garlands at the top and surmounted by a square *harmikā*. Above it rises a tapering row of *chhatras*, the topmost one of which is adorned by flying streamers.



The second *stūpa* is labelled as '*Tulā-kshetre Vardhamāna-stūpa.*' Vardhamāna, which, as a place name, occurs rather early in Indian literature, has been identified

[1] Foucher, *Icon.* Pl. I. 4; Saraswati, *op. cit.* Pl. I. *a.*

with modern Burdwan. Tulākshetra, with its locative case-ending, appears also to be a topographical name, and is placed, in the same manuscript, in Varendra. It is thus likely that Vardhamāna in this descriptive label might refer to the last Jaina *tīrthaṅkara,* and the *stūpa* represents a Jaina shrine dedicated in his honour. But such an inference is obviously inconsistent with the fact that the name of the *stūpa* occurs in a Buddhist manuscript purporting to illustrate the famous shrines of the Buddhist faith. Under the circumstances, the problem of the interpretation and nature of the shrine cannot but be left open. What we are concerned with is the architectural feature of the monument,[1] which exhibits two *stūpas* of exactly similar design and elevation, placed side by side. The basement, square in plan with one projection on each side, consists of four elaborately carved stages separated by recessed mouldings. The drum is designed in the shape of a double-petalled lotus, and over it is placed the dome, similar to the preceding example but without the niches, along with its upper component members.

The basement of the third *stūpa*[2] consists of a double row of petals, separated by two plain mouldings, and supports a square terrace with two rectangular niches on each side. The drum has the shape of a lotus with drooping petals and over it rises an almost cylindrical dome with a cinque-foil niche on each side. The *harmikā* has a concave outline and streamers are attached to the shaft of the conical *chhatrāvalī.*

Remains of several brick *stūpas* have been laid bare at Pāhārpur (Rajshahi)[3] and Bahulārā (Bankura).[4] Some of them are quite plain but others are more ornamented. By far the largest number of such votive offerings have come to light from the site of Satyapīr-*bhiṭā* at Pāhārpur. As a rule such votive structures stand isolated from one another, occasionally in a row, though sometimes a group of them has been found situated on a bigger common platform. Again an important votive *stūpa* may be found to be surrounded by four miniature ones rising from the same plinth. They belong mostly to a comparatively late period in the history of the Pāhārpur shrine and none of them can be said to have been erected earlier than the 10th century A.D.

These brick structures, however, have only their basements preserved. They exhibit varied designs in planning—square, cruciform and circular. The first and the last, however, are very scarce, while the second, *i.e.,* the cruciform plan, obtained by one, two or even three offset projections on each face of the square, may be noticed

[1] Foucher, *Icon.* Pl. I. 3.
[2] *Paharpur.* 29, 84; Pls. XX (c), LXVI-LXVIII.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 54, Fig. 4.
[4] *ASI.* 1922-23. p. 112.

in the majority of cases. The number of such projections is usually greater in the later structures. As in the mediaeval examples, the basements are always high and exhibit successive tiers of elaborate mouldings, including the 'torus' and the 'dentil'. Both in plan as well as in designs of the mouldings they very nearly correspond to their stone prototypes in Bihar. Like them, too, the basements were sometimes decorated with rows of Buddha figures, as is indicated by the moulded terracotta plaques, exhibiting friezes of Buddha figures in the attitudes of enlightenment and preaching, discovered while laying bare such votive offerings round the central shrine at Satyapīr-*bhiṭā*. There is thus no fundamental disagreement between the basements of these brick structures and those of the stone votive *stūpas* from the adjoining province of Bihar. They also tally essentially with those of the illustrated Vardhamāna-*stūpa* and the bronze specimens from Bengal noted above (*supra* p. 484). On the analogy of these, therefore, the composition of the missing upper elements of these brick structures may be reconstructed as consisting of an elaborate drum, probably with Buddha figures in ornamental niches, the plain hemispherical dome, the square or the cruciform *harmikā* and the conical finial of the *chhatrāvalī*, rising in succession one above the other from the basement upwards. The form of the dome might have been the same as shown in one of the terracotta plaques from Pāhārpur (Pl. xxviii. 69). The *chhatrāvalī* appears to have been made up of terracotta plano-convex discs (a large number of which has been found during the excavations), each with a central hole, placed in graded size.

Occasionally, these structures enshrined miniature clay *stūpas* encasing minute round sealings impressed with the Buddhist creed. This custom also appears to have been in vogue in other famous Buddhist sites like Nālandā, Bodh-Gayā, Sārnāth, Mirpur Khās *etc*. I-tsing informs us that the sacred formula was placed inside the *stūpas* as a substitute for the corporeal relic.[1] The sacred formula, as the essence of the Buddha's teaching, was looked upon as the embodiment of the faith (*dharma-śarīra*), and the *stūpas* that enshrined them may be said to have had a twofold character—relic and votive.

Besides the basements described above, there is one of a very novel design in the courtyard of the monastic area.[2] It consists of a circular base over which rises a high plinth with sixteen projected angles (and sixteen corresponding recessed angles), each projection just touching the outline of the circular base (Pl. xxix, 70). It is

[1] *I-tsing*. 151.

[2] *Paharpur*. Pl. xv, *d*.

well-decorated with elaborate mouldings, in which the bold 'torus' is prominent. The provision of so many projecting and re-entrant angles may be regarded as a logical culmination of the desire for elaboration of the original ground-plan, which was first manifest in the addition of a number of projections on each face of a square structure. Seen from the top, the whole structure looks like a sixteen-sided star evenly arranged inside a circle. This novel plan and arrangement of the basement suggest a novel shape and appearance of the super-structure; but unfortunately the upper members are irretrievably lost.

From an examination of the extant specimens the characteristic features of the *stūpa* architecture in Bengal may be summed up as follows: Votive *stūpas,* plainly square or circular in shape, have been known to exist at Pāhārpur and Bahulārā. But such simple structures are rather rare and the prevailing style shows a high basement, square with one, two, or three projections on each face, variegated still more with numerous lines of horizontal mouldings. The number and depth of the projections as well as of the mouldings offer a rough standard in stylistic evolution. The Ashrafpur specimen shows niches with sculptured figures on the basement, and such a decorative scheme may also be found to actuate at least some of the brick examples at Satyapīr-*bhiṭā* (Pāhārpur). Next comes the drum, plain or ornamented, and sometimes with four figures in niches round its body. The dome—originally the principal element in the *stūpa,* now a mere finish or capping to a series of elaborate mouldings forming a lofty base—is either hemispherical or cylindrical, and, though generally plain, is sometimes decorated with garlands at the top and niches containing figures at the bottom. It supports the square or cruciform *harmikā,* and the rows of diminishing *chhatras* ending in a pointed finial, sometimes with streamers flying from it. The stone example of Jogī-gophā exhibits an extremely elongated type and may be said to represent the final transformation of a hemispherical shape into a spire-like one through successive stages of heightening, achieved by adding to, and elevating the different parts.

III. MONASTIC ARCHITECTURE

The monasteries *(saṁghārāma, vihāra)* in India were designed as a square block formed by four rows of cells along the four sides of an inner courtyard. In the earlier period they were usually built of wood on a stylobate of stone or brick. As the monastic organisation developed, they became elaborate brick structures with many

adjuncts. Often they consisted of several storeys and along the inner courtyard there usually ran a verandah supported on pillars. From a simple dwelling house for the monks, the *vihāra* often ultimately came to be transformed into an important centre of learning, something in the form of a modern residential university.

Ancient Bengal had also her monastic organisations and establishments, and there are inscriptions and other evidences, testifying to the existence of many such institutions from the 5th century A.D. down to the late Pāla epoch, as already noted above (*supra* p. 417).

An idea of the magnificence of some of these establishments may be had from Hiuen Tsang's description of the Po-shih-po monastery in Puṇḍravardhana and the Lo-to-mo-chih in Karṇasuvarṇa,[1] which had spacious and roomy halls and courts and lofty and storeyed towers and pavilions. But they have all perished and no trace remains above ground of their ancient fame and prosperity. The great Po-shih-po *vihāra* of Hiuen Tsang has been identified with the ruins of Bhāsuā Vihār near Mahāsthān (ancient Puṇḍravardhana), where a gigantic mound (approximately 800′×750′×40′) seems to be all that remains of that once magnificent *vihāra*.[2]

One of the earliest *vihāras* in the province may be located at Bihārail (Rajshahi), where trial excavations of a mound, locally known as Rājbāḍī, exposed the remains of a structure constructed "on the familiar ancient plan of a row of cells round a central courtyard."[3] From the finds and from the fairly large size of bricks the structure should be ascribed to a date not later than the Gupta period. Perhaps another monastery of about the 6th or 7th century A.D. may be recognised in the Rākshasī-ḍāṅgā mound at Rāṅgāmāṭī (Murshidabad), the reputed site of Karṇasuvarṇa.[4] No definite evidence has, however, been discovered yet to connect it with the celebrated Lo-to-mo-chih *vihāra* of Hiuen Tsang.

The wealth of materials laid bare at Pāhārpur is likely to prove of the greatest help in ascertaining the form and features of a monastery in ancient Bengal. Two inscriptions—one on a copper-plate and the other on a set of sealings—prove the existence of two *vihāras* at the site in two different periods. First we have the Jaina *vihāra* of Guhanandī at Vaṭagohālī, mentioned in the copper-plate grant of the (Gupta) year 159 (479 A.D.).[5] From the latter part of the 8th century, however, the site was well known as the great Buddhist *vihāra* of Dharmapāla at Somapura (modern Ompur, a mile to the

[1] Beal-*Records*. II. 195, 202.
[2] *ASI*. 1922-23, p. 108.
[3] *ASI*. 1927-28, p. 107.
[4] *VRS.M*. No. 2, p. 14.
[5] *Ibid*. 1928-29, p. 99.

south of the ruins), as is proved by reference, in a set of sealings, to the community of monks residing at the monastery of Dharmapāladeva at Somapura (*śrī-Somapure śrī-Dharmapāladeva-mahāvihārīy-āryya-bhikshu-saṁghasya*).[1] The name and fame of this *vihāra* spread far and wide (*supra* p. 417) and it is mentioned in inscriptions from Bodh-Gayā[2] and Nālandā[3] and in Tibetan translations of certain Sanskrit Buddhist works.[4]

It is difficult to ascertain the plan of the earlier Jaina *vihāra*. It is, however, reasonable to assume that, as elsewhere, it followed the usual plan having the monks' chambers set round a quadrangular court. The Pāla *vihāra*, which followed the same plan, was conceived on a much grander scale as the ruins unearthed at Pāhārpur clearly show. The entire establishment, occupying a quadrangle measuring more than 900 feet externally on each side,[5] has high enclosure walls lined on the inside with nearly 177 cells, excluding the cells of the central block in each direction. The wallings, though not preserved to a very great height, envisage, from their thickness and massiveness, a storeyed structure, exactly commensurate with the terraced form of the main temple in the centre of the enclosure. As K. N. Dikshit has justly remarked:

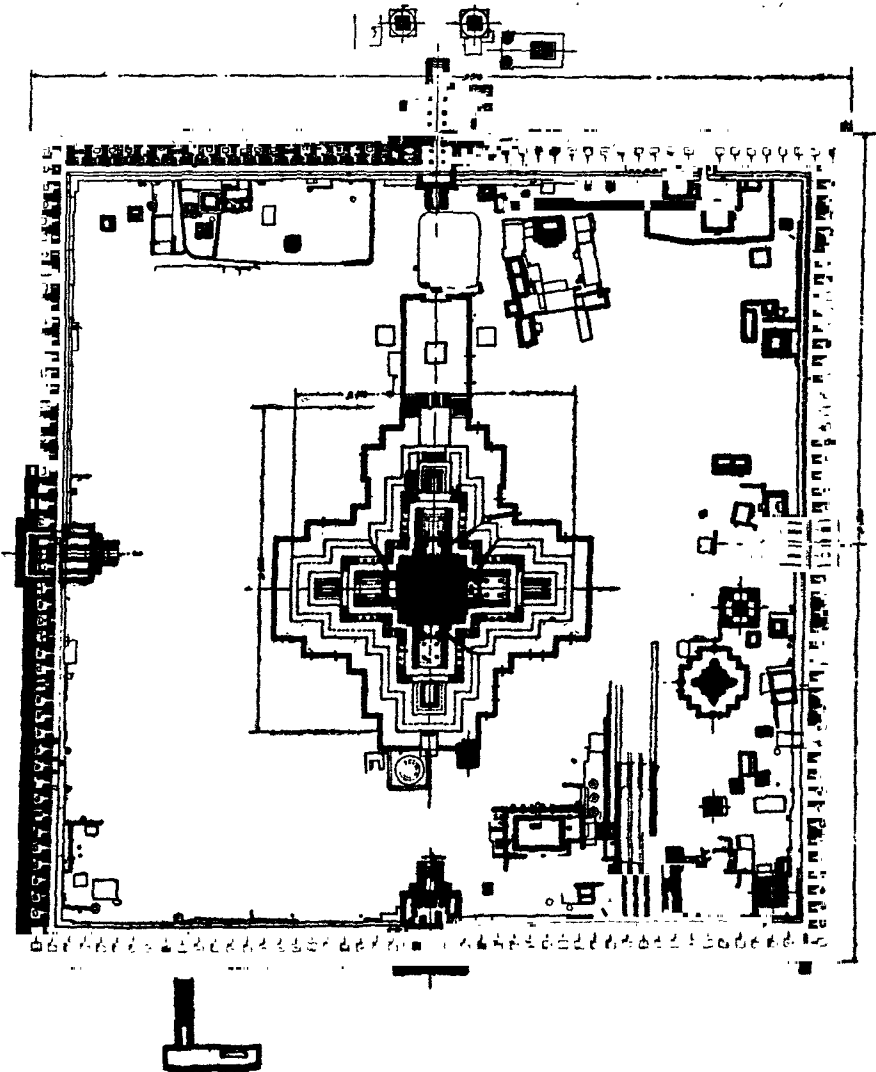
"no single monastery of such dimensions has come to light in India and the appellation, *mahāvihāra*, 'the great monastery', as designating the place, can be considered entirely appropriate."[6]

Considerations of space forbid a detailed description of this gigantic *vihāra*. Only the general plan and the principal features may be briefly set forth here. The main portal was towards the north, where a flight of steps leads up to a large pillared hall, open to the north, *i.e.*, on the outside, but enclosed with massive walls on the other three sides, access to a smaller hall in the interior being obtained through a single doorway at the back, *i.e.* the south wall. This smaller hall is open to the south, with its roof supported, as in the outer hall, on pillars. This inner hall leads the visitor across the main verandah to the ruined flight of steps descending to the inner courtyard which stands in front of the main temple.

Branching off on left and right from the top of this flight of steps there ran along the inner side of each of the four enclosure walls a single (sometimes double) row of cells (each approximately

[1] *ASI.* 1927-28, p. 105.
[2] *Ibid.* 1908-9, p. 158.
[3] *EI.* XXI. 101.
[4] Cordier-*Cat.* II. 98, 116, 120, 250; III. 5, 299.
[5] In *Paharpur* (p. 18), the dimensions are wrongly given as 822′ externally on each side. The plan provided (Pl. I.) gives the correct measurement which is 922′ north to south and 919′ east to west.
[6] *ASI.* 1927-28, p. 106.

13′ 6″ in length)—all connected by a spacious corridor (approximately 8′ to 9′ wide), running continuously all round, and approached from the inner courtyard by flights of steps provided



in the middle of each of the four sides. It should be pointed out in this connection that the monastery, renovated by the monk Vipulaśrīmitra, has been described as a four-fold one, which probably refers to the four lines of cells along the four sides of the quadrangle. The cells are approached by doorways with an inward splay. The masonry is all laid in ashlar courses, but at a certain

height the walls, where preserved, show one course of brick-on-edge rivetment to relieve the monotony of the plain ashlar courses. While the centre of the northern side was occupied by the two entrance halls noted above, the central block on the other three sides is marked by a projection in the exterior wall and is occupied by a group of three cells, with a passage all round, and the landing stage to the inner courtyard in front. Besides the main gateway to the north, access to the quadrangle might also be had by a subsidiary entrance through the northern enclosure near its eastern end. There was no arrangement for ingress on the southern and western sides, but possibly a small passage in the middle of the eastern block was provided for private entrance. The roof of the corridor seems, as elsewhere, to have been supported on pillars and there were probably railings fencing off the corridor except at the approaches.[1] The plinth of the corridor was adorned with a single line of terracotta plaques. But this scheme of decoration appears to belong to a late period in the history of the establishment.

Excavations have revealed several strata in the remains of the monastery. The lowest *i.e.* the earliest dates back to the period of the original construction of the monastery in the time of Dharmapāla. It continued to exist down to the Muhammadan conquest, through various vicissitudes, which necessitated renovations and repairs at different periods. But barring minor additions and alterations, the general arrangement, described above, is the result of a well-thought-out plan and belongs to a single period of construction. The numerous cells of the monastery were certainly originally meant as residences for monks, who thronged the monastery at that time. But in later stages of occupation, as is apparent from the occurrence of ornate pedestals in the majority of the cells, they were devoted to purposes more ceremonial than residential. A sheltered room by the side of the main gateway has been identified as the office of this huge establishment,[2] and from fragmentary evidences one can envisage an elaborate drainage arrangement from room to room, from higher to lower terrace, from yard to yard, leading finally perhaps to a masonry tank or pool inside the enclosure. In between the lines of cells along the four sides and the main temple in the centre there were open courts, shrines and votive *stūpas*, walls, bathing platforms, refectory establishments, *etc.*—all parapharnelia of a prosperous monastic

[1] Compare the rectangular brick basements of the early period at a lower stratum in front of rooms Nos. 12-15. Apparently a railing, which was possibly of wood, was supported on pillars resting on these brick bases (*Paharpur.* 21).

[2] *ASI.* 1927-28, p. 104.

establishment. They, however, exhibit various periods of construction. But it must be stressed that in spite of different periods in the history of the monastery there was no material alteration of the original plan.

In reconstructing the monastic architecture of Bengal, we have now before us the biggest monastery in India, though in ruins. It has been described in the Nālandā inscription of Vipulaśrīmitra as "a singular feast to the eyes of the world,"[1] a praise that appears to be justified even from what is preserved today. The general form and features and the whole lay-out, so far as can be gathered, show but little difference from those of similar establishments in famous sites elsewhere. But it excels others in its gigantic dimensions and in its well-planned arrangement. It is hoped that further explorations will unearth similar establishments, which may not equal Pāhārpur in extent, but will not, perhaps, vary materially from it in plan and general features.

IV. Temple Architecture

Temples were constructed in Bengal in large numbers (*supra* p. 480), but save a few structures, belonging mostly to the 11th and 12th centuries A.D., they have all perished, leaving no trace behind. The magnificence of some of these temples is referred to in inscriptions and literature, and some of them, which were presumably more reputed than others, are mentioned and illustrated in the two Buddhist manuscripts referred to above (*supra* p. 480). These include the temples of the Buddha at Puṇḍravardhana and Rāḍhā, of Tārā in Varendra, and of Lokanātha in Samataṭa, Varendra, Rāḍhā, Nālendra and Daṇḍabhukti.

Although no temples of great antiquity exist in Bengal, we get some idea about their general features from the illustrated representations in MSS. as well as from several stone reliefs, for in many cases the deity is shown as installed in temples whose outlines are carved round the divine figure. By a close study and analysis of these, the temples of ancient Bengal, which all naturally belonged to the northern style of Indian architecture, may be divided into three or four distinct types according to the form of the roof over the sanctum.

The first type, which might be regarded as the earliest, exhibits a roof consisting of a number of horizontal tiers, gradually diminishing

[1] *EI.* XXI. 97.

in size as they go up, with a recess between each stage. The earliest representations of such a temple may be found on some sculptures from Sārnāth[1] and the type may thus go back to the Gupta period. The type is widely distributed over different parts of Northern India. In a developed form, with the horizontal tiered stages compressed in a pyramidal shape, it appears in Orissa, exclusively as the roof of the *jagamohana,* and is known as the *bhadra-* or *pīḍa-deul* in distinction to the *rekha-* which has a high curvilinear *śikhara* surmounting the sanctum. The earliest form of this tiered type in Bengal occurs on the Ashrafpur bronze *chaitya* (*c.* 7th century A.D.) and the gradual evolution may be studied with the help of several images represented as seated within temples of this type. The early form, with its pillars reminiscent of earlier construction in bamboo or wood, and peculiar finial the like of which may be found in modern wooden and corrugated structures, appears to be nearer to the thatched hut construction, from which the type seems to have originated.

Side by side with this tiered type, more or less of stunted appearance, there also existed the *rekha* one, distinguished by a lofty tower over the cube of the sanctum. The *rekha* temple exhibits what is known as the *nāgara* style in the Indian *śilpaśāstras.* The distinctive cognisances of this style, as revealed by extant monuments, are a cruciform ground-plan (square with a number of offset projections on each face) and a curvilinear tower (*śukanāsa-śikhara*), which characterise every mediaeval temple of Northern India. The simplest arche-type of the style may be found in a group of temples that may be dated about the 6th century A.D.,[2] but as a result of evolution through the ages and in different localities, the style undergoes varied transformations. Of all the different regional manifestations of the *nāgara* temple style, that of Orissa (Kaliṅga) is one of the most remarkable. The innumerable temples erected in Orissa represent, to quote Fergusson,[3] "one of the most compact and homogeneous architectural groups in India." The *rekha* temples of Bengal had much in common with those of Orissa and very closely resemble the specimens in some early sculptures from Bihar.[4]

Over and above these two types, which recur more or less frequently, one or two rare and curious ones may also be recognised

[1] D. R. Sahni, *Catalogue of the Museum of Archaeology at Sārnāth,* pp. 233-34, Pls. xxv-xxix.

[2] *JISOA.* VIII. 156-57.

[3] Fergusson and Burgess, *Hist. of Indian and Eastern Architecture,* II. 92.

[4] For Bihar specimens see *EISMS.* Pl. xc (*a*), xciv (*b*), xix (*b*).

to have existed in Bengal. These types appear to be amplifications and elaborations of the first, *i.e.* the tiered type mentioned above. The amplification consists in the provision of a superstructure over the tiered roof. This superstructure took the shape either of a *stūpa* or of a *śikhara,* and both the varieties might have been in vogue simultaneously. The type with the *śikhara* over the tiered roof, however, appears to have been the more favoured of the two, and may be regarded as a combination of the *bhadra* and the *rekha* elements. Further elaborations of these two types may be noticed in the provision of miniature replicas of the crowning superstructure at the corners of the tiered stages and in front. These types are found outlined in a series of miniature paintings in the manuscripts mentioned above.[1] They characterise several famous shrines in such widely scattered sites as Puṇḍravardhana, Nālendra (in Bengal), Tīrabhukti, Oḍra-deśa, and Uḍḍiyāna, all situated in Eastern India, except the last, the location of which is not yet definitely settled.[2] At least four stone images, of which three come from Bengal and the fourth from Bihar, exhibit representations of the last variety, *i.e.* of the type consisting of a *śikhara* over the tiered roof. Similar temple types may also be found represented in terracotta votive tablets from Pagan (Pl. xxxi, 78) and a stone sculpture from Hmawza (old Prome), both in Burma.[3]

The above analysis leads to a classification of the ancient temples of Bengal into four distinct types, namely :

i. The *bhadra, pīḍa* or tiered type, in which the roof over the sanctum consists of a series of gradually receding tiered stages crowned by the usual finials including the *āmalaka.*

ii. The *rekha* or the *śikhara* type, characterised by a high curvilinear tower and the usual crowning elements.

iii. The tiered type surmounted by a *stūpa.*

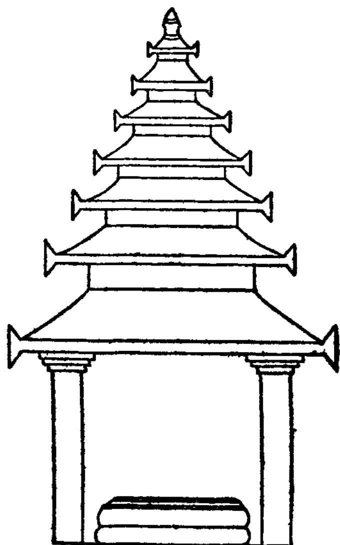
iv. The tiered type surmounted by a *śikhara.*

It should be noted, however, that structural examples of these different types, except those of the second, are very rare, if not unknown, specially so far as the last two are concerned.

Before proceeding further with the description of these different types, we should note the existence of similar temples in Further India and Indonesia, not merely to indicate the great influence exercised by Eastern Indian architecture in these regions, but also

[1] Foucher, *Icon.* Pls. iii. 4; v. 1; vi. 5; vii. 1.
[2] Cf. *supra* p. 333, f.n. 1.
[3] *JGIS.* ix. 5-28.

to give an idea of what the Bengal temples looked like when they were intact. It is not difficult to trace in the first, *i.e.* the tiered type, the beginning of the elaborate *pyatthats* of Burma, with its many tiered roofs.[1] The plain and earlier specimens of the *pyatthats,* as seen in the tiered palaces of Prince Siddhārtha in the sculptures of the Ānanda temple at Pagan,[2] closely correspond to the tiered temples that may be found widely distributed over India, and as the Indian examples are earlier in date, the possibility that architecturally they were also the antecedents is clearly suggested. A somewhat similar type may be seen in the miniature monolithic shrines inside the premises of the Chaṇḍi Panataran in Java, and it still survives in the modern architecture of Bali.[3]

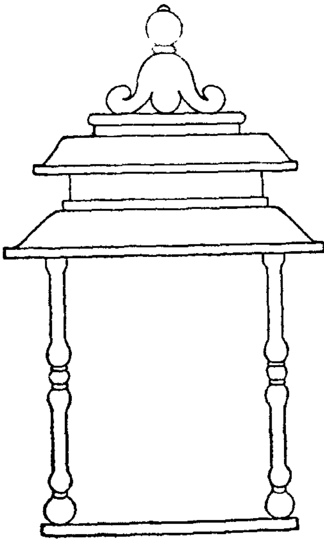


The origin of the square temples of Pagan,[4] which present remarkable dissimilarity with anything standing on the continent of India, has led to much speculation. In elevation they consist of a roof of several tiered stages crowned by a superstructure, either a *stūpa* or a *śikhara,* each complete with its common and distinctive elements. There are quite a large number of such temples at Pagan, and though there may be recognised several varieties, all of them appear to be actuated by a common architectural tradition. A tiered roof surmounted by a crowning superstructure, a *stūpa* or a *śikhara,* represents the prominent characteristics of types III and IV of Bengal temples mentioned above, which may be said to have been fairly prolific in Eastern India. The Abeyadāna (Pl. XXXVII, 90) and the Patothamya, each with a *stūpa* over the tiered roof, are closely akin to the temples of type III, while those with the *śikhara,* of which the Ānanda, the Thatbyinnyu, the Thitswada (Pl. XXXVII. 91), the Tilominlo, *etc.* are the most well-known, particularly conform to the temples of type IV. Sculptural representations of the Pagan type of temples may also be found on a number of terracotta votive tablets (Pl. XXXI, 78) from Pagan and a stone sculpture from Prome, and these reliefs furnish exact

[1] *JISOA.* II. 133.
[2] *ASI.* 1912-13. LXXXIII.
[3] A. K. Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art,* Fig. 351.
[4] *JGIS.* IX. 5-28 and plates.

parallels of similar representations of temples in sculptures and paintings on the basis of which we have reconstructed the types III and IV. The structural examples at Pagan may exhibit distinctive characteristics in plan and general arrangement, but it cannot be doubted that the shape and elevation of the monuments of Eastern India, as represented by types III and IV, exercised considerable influence in determining the form and appearance of the Pagan monuments. A solitary example of type III may further be found in Java in Chaṇḍi Pavon,[1] a small sanctuary with a roof of two tiered stages, surmounted by a *stūpa* at the top, and surrounded by eight smaller ones in the next lower stage.

We may now proceed with the description of the first type of temples. As already observed, its tower presents the shape of a fairly high stepped pyramid rising from the top of the straight and perpendicular walls of the *garbha-gṛiha*. It is made up of horizontal tiers of stone (*pīḍas*, as they are known in Orissa), gradually diminishing as they rise, with a recess between each course. Over the last course rests the huge *āmalaka-śilā*, on a narrow cylindrical neck, ultimately capped by the usual finials.



The frequency of this type of temples in Bengal may be surmised from the rather large number of such representations on the sculptures of the province. The Ashrafpur bronze *stūpa* dated about the 7th century A.D. gives us in relief what was probably the earliest form. Here we find a simple roof composed of two receding courses of sloping tiers with a recessed space in between and crowned by a peculiar finial[2] (see sketch).

The gradual evolution and elaboration of the type may be noticed in the multiplication of the tiered courses and in the introduction of the usual decorative elements. The image of Kalyāṇasundara from Hili, now in the Dacca Sāhitya Parishat, exhibits three tiered courses, capped by a round coping stone (not yet a

[1] R. C. Majumdar, *Suvarṇadvīpa*, Pt. II, Pl. IV.
[2] *JISOA*. II. 132; *EISMS*. Pl. LXXV(*b*).

true *āmalaka* as the edges are not indented) above a narrow neck, topped further by a conical finial. The type may be seen as fully evolved in several images, where we find temples with trefoil arches supported on richly decorated pillars, the roofs being composed of an odd number of *pīḍas* (here sloping tiers), three or five, and the whole surmounted by the *āmalaka* and the usual finials. The last tier (what is known in Orissa as the *ghāḍachakra, i.e.*, the tier just below the neck) occasionally shows rampant lions at the corners, as we distinctly see in the representation of the temple on the image of Umā-Maheśvara from Birol (Rajshahi; Pl. XXX, 74).

For illustration, we refer to the images of Sūrya from Kuldiā (24-Parganas), Sūrya from Bariā (Rajshahi; Pl. XXX. 76), Ratnasambhava from Vikrampur (Dacca; Pl. XXX, 75), Buddha from Madhyapārā (Dacca) with the inscription of *dānapati* Nirupama (Pl. XXXI, 77), Umā-Maheśvara from Birol (Pl. XXX, 74), etc., and a fragment of a door-jamb with Gaṇeśa in a niche, the door-jamb with Īśāna in a niche from Mandoil (Rajshahi; Pl. XLIII. 105), and a huge architectural stone from Kumārpur (Rajshahi; Pl. XXXII, 79).

The ground-plan occasionally exhibits a temple of the *ratha, i.e.* the cruciform, type (as evidenced on the twin temples on the architectural stone from Kumārpur and corroborated by the Sūrya image from Bariā, both in the Rajshahi Museum), the *rathas* being obtained by the addition of one or two projections on each side of the square sanctum. The type appears to be still surviving in the large number of simple brick temples in Bengal, the roof of which rises in two receding tiers. Such examples also occur in relief in the terracotta decorations of the 16th and 17th century temples, ruins of which are found throughout the province. The similarity with the temple carved in relief on the Ashrafpur votive *stūpa* is striking, only the outline of the tiers in these late examples has grown curvilinear instead of the straight slope in the earlier form. This curvilinear form may be said to be an imitation of thatched huts in which the bamboos are lashed together at the apex and tied in near the lower end, thus forming a singularly strong frame-work of arched form.

The Nandī pavilion (Pl. XXXII, 80) within the premises of a temple at Ekteśwar (Bankura) provides us with a structural example of this type.[1] The date of this structure is uncertain. There is every possibility that it belonged to a period outside our scope. Yet, as presenting an archaic form, a brief description of it may not be out of place here. It is a simple square shrine with a pyramidal roof, composed of three receding tiers, resting on four

[1] *JISOA*. II. 132.

square pillars. Though divested of the *āmalaka* and the usual finials, its importance lies in the fact that it gives us an idea of what this type of temples looked like, as distinguished from the relief outline of the painted illustrations or sculptured images, which are at present our only basis for the reconstruction of the lost temple-forms.

The next important type is the *rekha deul, i.e.* the temple with curvilinear *śikhara* (tower), of which we are fortunate enough to possess several standing structures and at least three votive miniatures, two of them being in the round. The former comprise three stone specimens—one at Barākar (Burdwan) and two at Dehār (Bankura), and some brick examples,—all in West Bengal. A more durable quality of the material used was perhaps responsible for the preservation of the stone specimens, while a comparative inaccessibility of the brick ones saved them from wilful destruction. Two of the miniatures are carved in stone and come respectively from Dinajpur (Pl. XLIII, 104) and Nimdīghi (Rajshahi; Pl. XXXIV, 82), while the third, made of bronze (Pl. XXXIV, 84), has been acquired from Jhewāri (Chittagong). The origin of the *rekha* tower from bamboo construction is now generally accepted and need not be discussed here in detail.

The earliest example of the *rekha* type of temples in Bengal appears to be the temple No. IV. at Barākar (Pl. XXXIII. 81).[1] It consists of a high *garbhagṛiha* (cella, sanctum) on a low basement and is surmounted by a short and stunted *śikhara* (tower), gradually curving inwards from its very beginning, and ultimately capped by a huge and archaic *āmalaka-śilā*. Both the *garbhagṛiha* and the *śikhara* are square in cross-section all through and the sharp edges of the corners and of the *ratha-paga* projections are rigidly maintained. In these respects and in the arrangement of the *rathas* and niches of the *garbhagṛiha* and *pagas* of the *śikhara*, the temple closely corresponds to the earliest group in Orissa, represented by the Paraśurāmeśvara temple at Bhuvaneśvara,[2] which has been ascribed to the 8th century A.D. The Barākar temple may, therefore, be dated about the same period or only a little later.

Next, at least as an architectonic type, come the three votive miniatures, which, so far as their general characteristics are concerned, are almost all alike and not far removed from one another in date. Each of them consists of a perpendicular *garbhagṛiha* with a sculptured trefoil niche on each face, raised over a cruciform basement

[1] *JISOA.* I. 125-27, Pl. XXXVI, Fig. 216.
[2] Coomaraswamy, *op. cit.* Fig. 216.

with several mouldings, and capped by the curvilinear *śikhara*, gradually sloping inwards, over which rests the *āmalaka* on a narrow neck. There is not yet any attempt at the rounding of the corners, and the sharp edges are rigidly maintained. The "*chaitya*-window" motif appears as a decorative pattern on the body of the *śikhara*, and a line of continuous scroll on the Dinajpur specimen presupposes a decoration that forms an important element in the later group of temples. In the two stone examples, a cornice of two or three courses demarcates the *śikhara* from the cella of the *garbhagṛiha* (Pl. XLIII, 104; Pl. XXXIV, 82),[1] but this feature is entirely absent in the bronze specimen. The empty niches of the latter (Pl. XXXIV, 84)[2] are approached by flights of steps on each side. The *āmalaka* of the monolith at Dinajpur is somewhat disproportionate and heavy, but the bronze templet presents a graceful contour of the *śikhara*, gradually inclining inwards, with a pleasingly proportionate *āmalaka* and *stūpa* finial. In spite of the narrow neck, the unbroken contour is maintained by the provision of rampant lions at the corners on the top of the *śikhara*.

The next group is represented by five other standing structures, one in the district of Burdwan, three in Bankura and the fifth in the damp forests of the Sundarbans. The structures are much damaged and recent conservation has completely transformed the shape of the fifth. But from what are preserved we are in a position to form a general idea of their architectonic shape and style, from the standpoint of which this group appears to be posterior to that of the miniature shrines, just described. The ground-plan, elevation and the general style of decoration resemble those of the earlier group; but they have grown more elaborate and a distinct development of the architectonic type is to be found in the chamfering of the edges of the corners of the *śikhara* so as to give the tower a more rounded shape, in the repetitions of the miniature *śikharas* on the body of the main one, and also in the provision of the approach vestibule in the thickness of the front wall.

The brick temple, recently discovered at Deuliyā (Burdwan; Pl. XXXV, 85)[3] exhibits a straight and perpendicular *garbhagṛiha* topped by a curvilinear *śikhara* the crowning members of which, now missing, probably consisted of an *āmalaka* and the usual finials. A singular feature, worth noticing, is that towards the top the cella of the *garbhagṛiha* has several inverted offsets forming a projected cornice, on the top of which the *śikhara* is placed. The facades of

[1] *JISOA*. II. 135.
[2] *Ibid*. 1934-35, p. 43, Pl. XIX, *a*.
[3] *ASI*. 1927-28, Pl. LVII, *a*.

both the sanctum and the *śikhara* are divided into sharp ridges, an arrangement that must have resulted from the division of the facades into *rathas* and *pagas*. The body of the sanctum is otherwise plain, but the *śikhara* is profusely decorated with scroll work and "*chaitya*-window" pattern. The corners are slightly chamfered, in contrast to the rigid corners of the earlier group, but the sharp edges of the ridges are retained. From this stand-point this temple appears to be anterior to the finest of this group, namely the Siddheśvara temple at Bahulārā (Bankura), which exhibits a more developed type (Pl. xxxv, 86).[1] In this specimen, made of brick, besides the division into *rathas* the plainness of the sanctum is relieved by niches, capped by miniature *śikharas* in the central *rathas*, and by three horizontal bands (*bandhana*) passing all around just in the centre. The last is peculiarly a feature of the typical Orissan temple, not usually met with elsewhere. Not only were the corners of the tower rounded, but there was also a corresponding rounding off of the different *pagas*. The ornamentations, too, have grown more elaborate and cover up the whole exterior face of the temple from the basement to the top of the spire. Unfortunately the top, consisting of the *āmalaka* and the finials, has tumbled down, giving the temple a rather bald appearance, and the hand of time has been heavy on the brick mouldings and decorations. But, considered as a whole, the graceful proportions and the chaste and elegant style of decorations make the temple one of the best specimens of Indian temple architecture. A. K. Coomaraswamy assigns[2] the temple to the 10th century A.D. K. N. Dikshit thinks[3] this date a century or two too early. From general architectonic shape and decorative style a date in the 11th century may not be unreasonable. Of the stone temples, the Sareśvara and the Sallesvara (Pl. xxxvi, 88)[4] at Dehār (Bankura), the sancta alone are now preserved, and as they closely resemble that of the Siddheśvara temple, all the three may be regarded as belonging to the same period. To this or somewhat later period probably also belongs the Jaṭār Deul in the Sundarbans (Pl. xxxvi, 87),[5] traditionally connected with an inscription (not traced) of one Rājā Jayantachandra, purported to have been issued in 975 A.D. Modern conservation, carried out in hopelessly indiscreet manner, has obliterated its original shape and features (Pl. xxxvi, 89). It is evident, however, from an earlier photograph, that the temple had considerable architectural merit, and closely resembled the Siddheśvara in plan,

1 *JISOA*. II. 139.
2 Coomaraswamy *op. cit.* p. 108, Fig. 213.
3 *ASI*. 1927-28, p. 41.
4 *JISOA*. II. 139-40. Pl. xlv. 6.
5 *Ibid*. 140, Pl. xlv. 7.

elevation and decoration, save that the latter showed a more curvilinear outline of the *śikhara*.

It appears from a study of the *rekha* temples of Bengal that they were related to the earlier group of Orissan temples like the Paraśurāmeśvara, the Mukteśvara, *etc.* It is interesting to point out that this early group in Orissa was nearer to the older arche-types of the Gupta and the post-Gupta periods and cannot be said to have developed as yet into the typical Orissan form, as is to be found in the famous Liṅgarāja at Bhuvaneśvara. The temples of Bengal, again, consist of a single element, the *deul* proper, there being no trace of the typical Orissan adjunct of the *jagamohana*. Instead, Bengal accommodated an approach vestibule in the thickness of the front wall. Further, the temples of Bengal do not show such extreme variation of the ground plan and section as is to be found in the later temples of Orissa. In these respects Bengali architects displayed a better sense of reserve and restraint than their Orissan contemporaries. The ornamentations in the Bengali temples are also chaste and elegant, the chief decorative motifs consisting of the "*chaitya*-window," the running scroll-work and the miniature replica of the tower arranged in rows. The *rekha* temples in Bengal may not have the grandeur of the stupendous stone monuments of the sister province of Orissa, but they exhibit better taste, and the brick examples in particular, though in ruins, represent a fine and mature skill in the science and art of architecture.

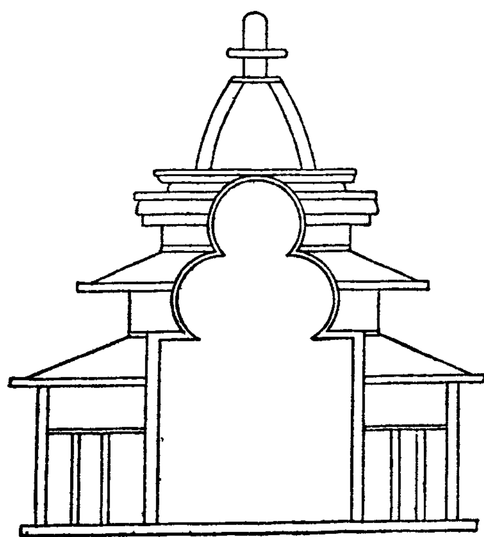
The temples described above are all that remain of the ancient *rekha*-architecture of the province. R. D. Banerji includes several others[1] within the mediaeval Eastern Indian school, but none of them appears to be earlier than 1200 A.D. The temples Nos. I, II, and III at Barākar can hardly be assigned to a period before the 15th century A.D.[2] The Ichhāi Ghosh temple at Gaurāṅgapur (Burdwan) seems to be still later in date. But these examples are important as survivals of the ancient *rekha* type in a period when it appears to have been forgotten and replaced by a different style of temple-architecture, the most varied examples of which are to be found at Vishṇupur (Bankura).

As an example of the third type of temples in Bengal may be mentioned the temple of Lokanātha in Nālendra, illustrated in MS. Add. 1643 at Cambridge.[3] Here the roof, rising in gradually receding tiers, is surmounted by a fairly big *stūpa*, complete with

[1] *EISMS. Pls.* LXXX (*c*), LXXXII, LXXXIII (*a*, *c*).
[2] *JISOA.* I. 128; *JRASBL.* II. 21.
[3] Foucher, *Icon.* Pl. V. 1.

all its component elements. The corners at each stage are further decorated with miniature replicas of the *stūpa,* and as such the temple represents a fair elaboration of the type which may be found in its simpler and apparently earlier form at Uḍḍiyāna and Tīrabhukti[1] where the corner elements have not made their appearance. No structural example of the type has been found to exist in Bengal or Eastern India, but possible analogues may be found in the Abeyadāna (Pl. XXXVII, 90) and the Patothamya at Pagan in Burma.

The fourth type may be seen in its early form in the manuscript illustration of the temple of the Buddha at Puṇḍravardhana (sketch)[2] and in an image of the Buddha from Mahākālī (Pl. XXXIV. 83).[3] The temple represented in each of these specimens exhibits a roof composed of a succession of sloping tiers in gradually diminishing stages with a curvilinear *śikhara* placed over the last stage. In the top section the *śikhara* ends with the usual *āmalaka-śilā* over which is raised a miniature *stūpa* as the finial to indicate the Buddhist character of such a monument. The temple over Arapachana Mañjuśrī, found somewhere in Bengal,[4] with its more elongated and slender outline of the *śikhara* and corner-towers, shaped like *chaityas,* surrounding the main spire at each tiered stage, may represent a further elaboration of this rare form. The two images of the Buddha, one from Śib-bāṭī (Khulna ; Pl. LXX. 170)[5] and the other from Bihar, closely resemble each other, and the temple over each of them, though partly obliterated by the crowds of figures required to portray the different events in the life of the Master, does not appear to differ much from that over the god Mañjuśrī. Sculptural representations of similar temples and possible structural analogues



[1] Foucher, *Icon.* Pl. VI. 5, VII. 1.
[2] *EISMS.* Pl. LXXXVI (*b*).
[3] *Ibid.* Pl. III. 4.
[4] Coomaraswamy, *op. cit.* Fig. 229.
[5] *EISMS.* Pl. XIX (*b, c*).

reproducing the main characteristics of the shape and elevation of the type have been found at Pagan in Burma.

The exacavations at Pāhārpur[1] are singularly important as exhuming a temple, which some scholars declare to be of a type entirely unknown to Indian archaeology. The colossal structure, measuring 356′ 6″ from north to south and 314′ 3″ from east to west, occupies nearly the centre of the immense quadrangle forming the monastery. The ground-plan (*infra* p. 505)[2] consists of a gigantic square cross with angles of projection between the arms. The temple (Pl. XXXVIII. 93) rose in several terraces, with a circumambulatory walk, enclosed on the outer side by a parapet wall around the monument, in each of the two upper terraces. Access to the first and second terraces was obtained by the extensive staircase provided on the north.

This apparently complex plan, however, becomes very simple when the monument is examined and studied from the top downwards. Dikshit appears to be right in observing that:

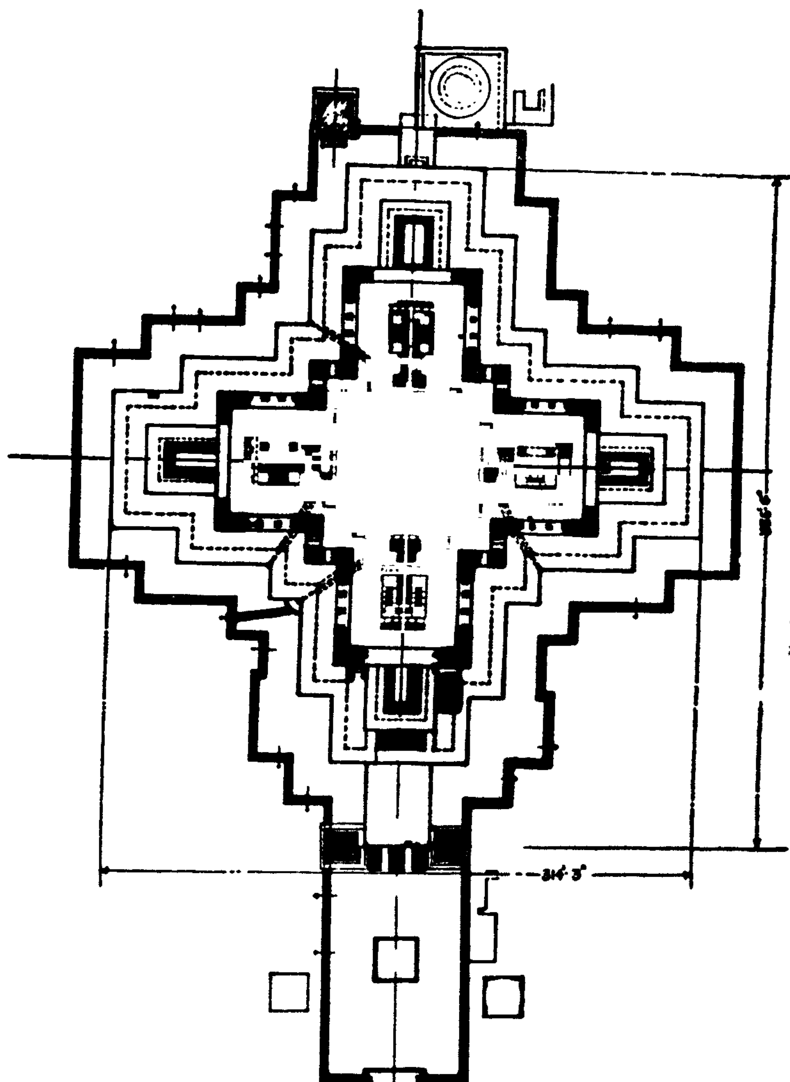
"the plan of the Pāhārpur temple was the result of a premeditated development of a single central unit, in which future expansion was in a sense predetermined in a vertical direction, that is in the setting up of new floors, *etc.* but not laterally."[3]

A hollow square pile in the centre, shooting high up above the terraces, provides the pivot round which the whole plan of the stupendous monument is conceived. The walls of this lofty central unit form a sharp square, and in order, most probably, to relieve this monotony, provision was made in the second upper terrace for a projection, consisting of an ante-chamber and a *maṇḍapa*, on each face, leaving out a portion of the whole length of the square at each of the four corners. This arrangement resulted in a cruciform shape with one projecting angle between the arms of the cross. The circumambulatory passage with the parapet wall was made to run parallel to the outline of this plan. A similar rectangular projection on each side was also added on the first terrace thus variegating the plan still more. The basement conformed to the alignment of the first terrace structure with the result that the angular projections in the plan of the first terrace and that of the basement were three each between the arms of the cross, to which an additional projection was added by the staircase landing just in the middle of the northern arm. An

[1] *ASI.* 1922-23, pp. 116-23; 1925-26. pp. 107-13, 141; 1926-27, pp. 140-49, 119; 1927-28, pp. 38-39, 101-11, 144-45; 1928-29, pp. 97-98; 1930-34, Pt. I, pp. 113-18; *Paharpur.*

[2] *ASI.* 1930-34, Pl. XLVII; *Paharpur.* Pl. I.

[3] *Paharpur.* 7.


314′ 3″

enclosure wall strictly conforming to the basement plan, with only a slight deviation near the main staircase, runs round the monument. There are reasons to believe that this complete plan, from the basement to the top, along with the different component elements, belonged to a single period of construction, and the evidences of later repairs, additions, and alterations did not fundamentally affect the general arrangement and plan. An earlier prototype of the Pāhārpur temple has been reported to have been discovered at Lauriyā Nandangarh in North Bihar.[1] But so far as can be gathered from published reports and reproductions, the angles of the Nandangarh monument appear to be purely decorative and to have originated from an entirely different conception. The disposition of the angles is different at Nandangarh, and every re-entrant angle has been strengthened with a buttress. The peculiar arrangement of the projections of rectangular structures round the monument at each lower level, which resulted in the projecting and re-entrant angles that we see at Pāhārpur, is found to be absent at Lauriyā Nandangarh. The Pāhārpur monument may be said to have its own distinctive characteristics and no exact parallel has so far been found elsewhere in India. It should be noted that the existing basement of a later structure within the monastic quadrangle[2] at Pāhārpur seems to be a close replica of that of the main temple. Here the plan is more perfect and symmetrical with the provision of approach-steps in all directions, instead of in the north only, as we have in the main temple.

It has been suggested by Dikshit[3] that the main shrine of this colossal edifice was situated at the top, *i.e.*, on the third terrace, and consisted of a square cella with a circumambulatory verandah all around. The evidence, now before us, is, however, against any such inference, and in view of the extremely mutilated condition of the monument at the top it is difficult to follow Dikshit's line of argument on this point. Naturally and logically, the sanctuary and what are described as its ante-chambers and *maṇḍapas* should have been placed at the same level. The hollow square pile, forming the central unit of this stupendous structure, exhibits a brick-paved floor inside "roughly at the level" of the ante-chambers and *maṇḍapas* that surround it. But no access to this inner square from the ante-chambers has been found, nor is there any evidence that there was such an access which had been blocked at a later period. Under the circumstances, the paved platform in the centre of the hollow

[1] *ASI.* 1935-36, pp. 55-66, Pl. xix-xxi; 1936-37, pp. 47-50, Pl. xxi.
[2] *Paharpur.* 25, Pl. xx(*b*).
[3] *Ibid.* p. 8.

square, which had been strengthened by a deep soling of bricks and several courses of offsets, does not appear to have served any function, except to add to the solidity of the foundation of the lofty walls of the central square. So far as the arrangement of the temple goes, the sanctuary could have neither been situated at the top nor inside the central square pile. Regarding the plan of the temple Dikshit has made one plausible suggestion that a four-faced (*Chaturmukha, Chaumukha*) Jaina temple, which existed very likely at the site, might have furnished the barest model[1] of the present structure. This is a pertinent suggestion, which is worth more serious consideration than has been given to it. In this connection, we should also take into account a particular type of temples at Pagan in Burma,[2] which may be described as an adaptation of *Chaumukha* shrines of the Jainas. The type represents a square temple with four figures of the Buddha, set in recessed niches, on the four faces of a solid masonry pile standing in the centre of a surrounding corridor which is approached through entrance vestibules on one or more of its faces. Later on, we shall have occasion to notice several other points of resemblance and affinity between the Pāhārpur monument and the Pagan temples. The Pagan temples seem to offer a striking analogy to the temple at Pāhārpur and may be compared with profit for the many problems that surround this unique Indian monument. The walls of the central square pile at Pāhārpur do not exhibit any evidence of their being provided with niches, but, bearing in mind the analogy of the Pagan temples and of *Chaumukha* shrines, a suggestion that images were installed, either in what are described as the ante-chambers or in the *maṇḍapa* halls which stand projecting from the four walls of the central square block in the second terrace, may not appear to be quite improbable.

The walls of the temple were built of well-burnt bricks, laid in mud mortar, and considering the materials used, it is remarkable that after a lapse of so many centuries parts of it are still standing to a height of about 70 feet above the ground level. The plainness of the walls is relieved on the outer face by projecting cornices of ornamental bricks ('twisted rope', 'stepped pyramid' and 'lotus petal' patterns) and bands of terracotta plaques, set in recessed

[1] Dikshit uses the word 'outline' (p. 7) which pre-supposes an earlier structure that served as the nucleus for additions and amplifications at different times. As it stands now, the temple belongs wholesale to a single period of construction and if any earlier structure existed it served as a model for the present monument, which was conceived on a much grander scale, and not as a nucleus for later additions and accretions.

[2] *JGIS.* IX. 5-28.

panels, which run in a single row all around the basement and in double rows around the circumambulatory passages in the upper terraces. Similar cornice patterns and bands of terracotta plaques of approximately the same date have also been laid bare at Gokul and at Govinda-*bhiṭā* in Mahāsthān.[1] In contrast with these terracotta plaques, the lower part of the basement is embellished with a number of stone sculptures in alto-relievo, which are almost wholly Brahmanical, but extraordinarily varied in style.

As already stated, the main fabric of the temple belongs to a single period of construction, most likely to the time of Dharmapāla, who was responsible for the foundation of the monastery around it in the latter part of the 8th century A.D. But the presence of not a few sculptures of definitely late Gupta style led scholars to refer the scheme of embellishment of the basement walls, and consequently also the construction of the temple, to the late Gupta epoch.[2] Dikshit has recently revised his opinion and attributes the construction of the temple to the time of Dharmapāla,[3] but he has not tried to explain the enigma of the occurrence of earlier and professedly Brahmanical sculptures in a later Buddhist temple.

There are as many as sixty-three stone sculptures decorating the basement, and a glance at the sketch-plan of the distribution of these sculptures around the basement walls is enough to show that they occupy niches, placed at irregular intervals, that cannot in any way reflect the original scheme of decoration, which must have been conceived according to a logical and ordered plan. As for example, the northern half of the basement has only twenty-two niches filled in with sculptures, while the southern half has as many as forty-one. Such irregularities are also clear in the disposition of the sculptures between each arm of the cross, *viz.* seven in the north-west sector, eleven in the north-east, twenty in the south-east and fourteen in the south-west. Such is also the case with regard to the main walls at the three cardinal points, *viz.* four in the eastern and the western walls and six in the southern. It is only the projecting angles that are invariably provided with sculptured niches on both faces (except at the southern end of the main western wall, where there is no corresponding sculpture facing south). But the niches, intermediate between the projecting angles, are most unequally distributed, there being no intermediate niche in the north-western sector and only four each in the north-eastern and south-western, while they occur most frequently in the south-eastern. Dikshit has tried to explain

[1] *ASI.* 1935-36, pp. 67 ff, Pl. XXVII; 1936-37, pp. 51 ff, Pl. XV-XVII.
[2] *Ibid.* 1927-28, p. 39.
[3] *Paharpur.* 37.

this clear irregularity by attributing the comparative absence of the intermediate niches in the northern half of the monument to the absence of direct sun light in the north and to the limited number of available stone reliefs.[1] But none of the explanations seems to be satisfactory, and the foregoing analysis leads us to the evident conclusion that the intermediate niches and sculptures, whether on the main walls or between the projecting angles, did not form part of the original plan, which admits of stone sculptures only at the angular projections, one on each face, as *pieces de accent.* Such an inference gains further strength when we find that the sculptures in these projections are almost always of approximately the same size, executed in the same kind of material, pertain to the popular narrative themes (having hardly any cult significance at all), and belong to a popular idiom of art, quite distinguished from the hierarchic and the classical, but intimately related to the vast number of terracottas—undoubtedly part of the original decorative scheme—stylistically as well as iconographically. These sculptures, as binding the corners of the stupendous monument, come in the logic of a planned decorative arrangement, and the construction of the main temple in all its essential features during the period of Dharmapāla in the latter part of the eighth century A.D. may safely be inferred. The intermediate niches, mostly fitted in with sculptures of Brahmanical deities of the late Gupta epoch, appear to have been provided for in later times to accommodate sculptures, as gathered from the earlier monuments at the site or in the neighbourhood. During the long life of the buildings at Pāhārpur, necessitating successive periods of repairs and renovations, it is only reasonable to assume that the existing niches were more than once disturbed, which account for some, but only a few, sculptures of the second group now appearing in the corners, pieces that can be definitely recognised as belonging to the corners filling up intermediate niches, or reliefs belonging to the basement decoration being picked up from the upper stratum in the monastic cells.

The superstructure, the method of roofing, and other details of the main temple are difficult to ascertain now. Sir John Marshall assumes the temple to have been a '*garbha-chaitya*' or a hollow pagoda.[2] Such was also the view of R. D. Banerji, who described the main shrine of the temple as consisting of a "hollow-roofed chamber.[3] But hollow-roofed temples are extremely rare, and it is quite reasonable to infer that the temple was capped by

[1] *Paharpur* p. 9.
[2] *Illustd. London News*, January 29, 1927, p. 160.
[3] *ASI.* 1925-26, p. 109.

some sort of superstructure. The arrangement of the structure at the lower terraces would appropriately suggest a roof rising in receding tiers over the vaults spanning the different corridors. The square masonry pile in the centre, on the analogy of the Pagan temples, may be said to have supported a curvilinear *śikhara* as the crowning element of this colossal edifice. At Pagan the central pile is solidly designed and constructed. But at Pāhārpur, probably to reduce the weight of the stupendous building and to guard against resultant sinking, it was left hollow, though sufficient stability for the accumulating weight as the monument rose up has been ensured in the enormous girth of each of the four walls. The above suggestion gains further strength from the analogy of the temples that may be found outlined in several of the images and paintings of Eastern India, noticed above (*supra* p. 503).

The temple-type at Pāhārpur has been frequently described as entirely unknown to Indian archaeology. The Indian literature on architecture,[1] however, often refers to a type of temple, known as *sarvatobhadra,* which should be a square shrine with four entrances at the cardinal points, and with an ante-chamber on each side *(chatuḥśālā-griha)*. It should have uninterrupted galleries all around, should have five storeys and sixteen corners and many beautiful turrets and spires. The temple at Pāhārpur, as now excavated, approximates in general to the *sarvatobhadra* type as described in Indian texts on architecture. It is a many-storeyed temple, consisting perhaps of a votive shrine in each of its four projected faces and surrounded by a continuous circumambulatory passage, with further projections and passages at the next lower terrace, to extend the building proportionate to its height, a measure which results in so many projecting and re-entrant angles of the ground plan. Thus, in Indian temple architecture the type does not appear to be quite unknown. It is only the disappearance of the other examples that has been responsible for the view that the Pāhārpur type is a novel one in Indian architecture. Presumably it was not very much developed on Indian soil and was ultimately forgotten. The *śāstras* enjoin such a type for the kings and gods, and most of the mounds in Bengal, that can still be traced as rising in terraces, may perhaps reveal, on excavation, such a type of temple. The ruins of a temple, exactly similar to the Pāhārpur plan but of much smaller dimensions, have accidentally been laid bare at Birāṭ (Rangpur).[2]

[1] *Bṛihat-saṁhita*. LII. 36 and also the relevant commentary; *Matsya Purāṇa*. Ch. 269, 34-35; *JISOA*. II. 137.

[2] *ASI*. 1925-26, p. 113.

From such remains and from representations of almost similar temples in the sculptures and paintings, this type may be taken to have been characteristic of Eastern India.

The importance of the type of temple laid bare at Pāhārpur in the history of Indian colonial art and architecture in the Far East is immense. Unfortunately our space is limited and a detailed discussion of this point with reference to every important feature cannot be attempted here. Suffice it to say, that this type of temple from Bengal profoundly influenced the architectural efforts of Further India, especially of Burma and Java, the origins and associations of which had been taxing the archaeologists since the time of James Fergusson. The square temples at Pagan in Burma present remarkable points of similarity with the Pāhārpur temple, and these have been discussed in detail elsewhere.[1] The points of divergence between the two are also many, and though the shape of the Pāhārpur monument might have afforded a possible scope for imitation by the Burmese architects, there must be recognised a fundamental difference in the general conception and arrangement of the Pagan temple as a whole. Dikshit refers to Chaṇḍi Loro Jongrang (Pl. XXXIX, 94) and the Chaṇḍi Sewu (Pl. XXXIX, 95) in Central Java, which offer the nearest approximation to the plan and superstructure of the Pāhārpur temple. "The general view of the former," Dikshit writes,

"with its angular projections, truncated pyramid shape and horizontal lines of decoration reproduces the prominent characteristics of the Indian monument. The inner plan of the Chaṇḍi Sewu strikingly resembles the plan of the central shrine and the second terrace at Pāhārpur."

The Pāhārpur temple belongs clearly to an earlier period; the close connection between Eastern India and the Archipelago is an established fact, and

"in view of the closer similarity between the two examples, the possibility is clearly suggested of the Indian monument being the prototype."[2]

The study of temple architecture will remain incomplete without a brief notice of a few fragments of brick buildings, not strictly falling within the groups mentioned above, that have been laid bare in recent explorations. Very few details have, however, survived and it is difficult, in most cases, to form any idea about the respective plan and elevation. The remains of the temple at Baigrām (Dinajpur) may, in all likelihood, be identified with the temple of Śivanandī, mentioned in the copper-plate grant, dated 128 G.E. (447-48 A.D.), that had been found at the site. Originally, it appears

[1] *JGIS.* IX. 5-28 and plates.

[2] *ASI.* 1927-28, p. 39.

to have consisted of a square sanctum, surrounded by a circumambulatory passage enclosed by a wall.[1] There is only one entrance door-way towards the west. In plan it is identical with a particular group of Gupta temples, represented by a flat-roofed square shrine within an outer hall of circumambulation,[2] but in the case of this contemporary Bengal example the method followed in roofing the inner sanctum and the outer hall is not known.

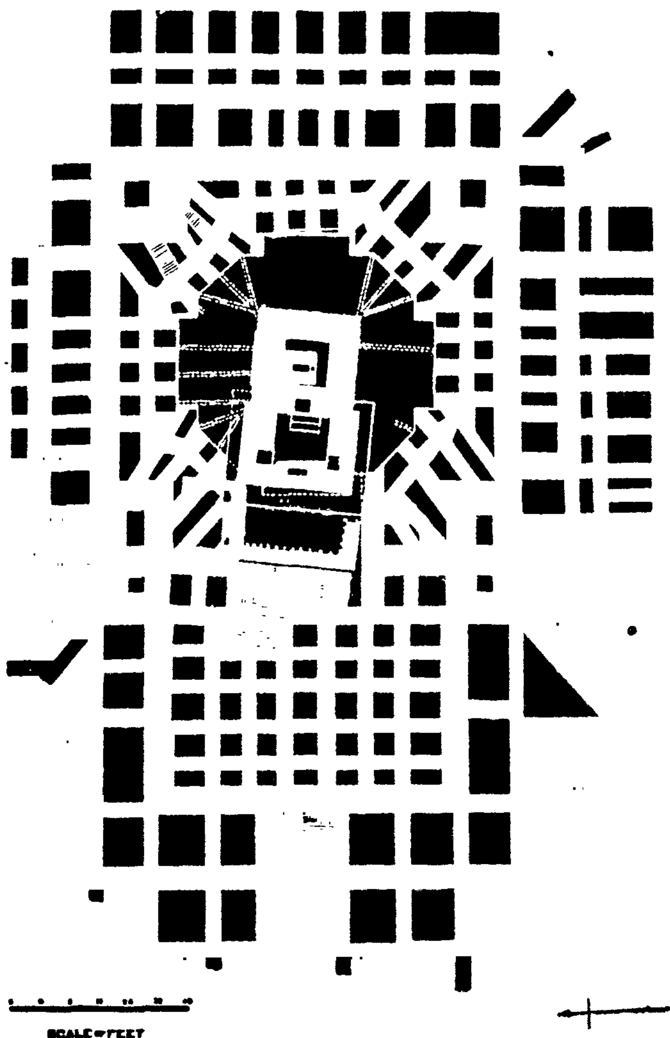
Several extremely mutilated structures have been unearthed in excavations carried on from time to time in and around the ancient city of Puṇḍravardhana, centring round present Mahāsthān (Bogra). At Bairāgir-*bhiṭā* inside the *garh* proper the trial excavations of 1928-29 exposed fragmentary structures at two different levels, assigned to the early and late Pāla epochs.[3] In both cases only the plinths are now preserved, the earlier structure being partially buried under the later, and all that can be known is that the former appears to have been of a cruciform plan with re-entrant angles.

The Govinda-*bhiṭā*, a high mound just abutting on the river Karatoyā outside the fortress walls of Mahāsthān, have exposed buildings of different periods, beginning from the late Gupta epoch, each successive structure partially enveloping and obliterating, to some extent, the one lying underneath.[4] As a result it is very difficult to obtain an idea of the plan and other features of a building of any particular period, unless each stratum and structures thereon have been systematically cleared and extricated. It is possible, however, to recognise among the different structures buildings of terraced elevation. The decoration of the walls with dados of terracotta plaques was also a characteristic mode of ornamentation in the early periods of construction. Some of the best pieces of terracotta art, whether loose or *in situ,* have been discovered at this site.

By far the most interesting structure in and around Mahāsthān appears to have been the one that once stood on the site of the gigantic Meḍh mound at Gokul. The mound was approximately 43 feet high, and, when excavated, presented the appearance of a cobweb of blind cells without any apparent plan or arrangement (Pl. XXXVIII, 92).[5] A closer study, however, reveals the fact that these apparently meaningless cells served an important purpose by providing a high and solid foundation for an imposing shrine at the top. Unfortunately only the plinth of the shrine has been

1 *ASI.* 1934-35, p. 42, Pl. XIX. *b, c, d.* 2 *JISOA.* VIII. 151.
3 *ASI.* 1928-29, pp. 90-91. 4 *Ibid.* pp. 94-97; 1936-37, pp. 51 ff.
5 *Ibid.* 1934-35, p. 41; 1935-36, pp. 67-68.

preserved to us. In plan it is a polygon of twenty-four sides having in its centre a circular structure, which had a gold leaf, bearing the figure of a bull in repoussé, deposited below. The shrine is placed more than thirty feet above the ground level on a solid foundation raised by means of four massive walls forming a



quadrangular platform, the intervening spaces of which were made compact by erecting cross-walls and by filling up the cell-like enclosures, thus formed, with earth. Subsidiary smaller quadrangles were also added on four sides to lend further strength to the high and solid foundation supporting the shrine. These subsidiary quadr-

angles were also rivetted on the outside by additional rows of walls and cells, they being shallower and of less height as they reach the ground level. The western quadrangle is longer than those on the other three sides, and from the remains of a wide flight of steps it may be assumed that the main approach was from the west. This novel arrangement of buttress quadrangles not only lent stability to the whole monument but also added to the grandeur and imposing character of the building that once stood on it. Unfortunately no evidence is available at present for ascertaining the form and appearance of the superstructure over this rather interesting shrine. Nevertheless, from the different levels of the successive quadrangles it may be assumed that the whole structure rose in graded terraces until the shrine at the top was reached.

v. Architectural Members

Various architectural members, specially pillars and door-frames, lie scattered throughout the ancient sites of the province. It was usually the custom to fashion such members either in wood or in stone, and the artists, especially those of the Pāla period, spared no pains to cover these up with elaborate decorations. Wooden members, because of their fragility, have mostly perished, but several specimens, recovered from East Bengal, may be seen in the Dacca Museum. Stone specimens, because of their durability, are more commonly found, and these members, lying about here and there in shapeless ruins, testify to the grandeur and grace of the edifices to which they once belonged. Pillars with decorations of the late Gupta period are known, but they are very rare. Mention should particularly be made of the two tall pillars, which had been utilised to form a drain in a later structure at Bairāgī-*bhiṭā* in Mahāsthān.[1] The richly ornamented fragments of basements for *pillars* in the *maṇḍapa* halls of the main temple at Pāhārpur are also worth noticing.[2] The characteristic motifs of lotus, *kīrtimukha*, etc. are boldly designed and elegantly executed, and illustrate the best traditions of Gupta art. There is no dearth, however, of pillars belonging to the Pāla period. The commonest and the simplest type is divided into three sections,—the base, the shaft, and the capital, the first and the last being square in shape while the second is octagonal. There is no decoration on them except a triangular and a rectangular device, carved alternately in low relief on each face, at

[1] *ASI.* 1928-29, p. 90, Pl. XXXVI. [2] *ASI.* 1927-28, XLVI, *d.*

the bottom and the top of the shaft. Sometimes, again, a "*chaitya*-window" motif on each face appears as the sole decorative pattern of this plain type. Quite a large number of such pillars have been found, and a good collection is preserved in the Rajshahi Museum.

A richly decorated type, belonging originally to a Śivaite edifice built by a 'lord of Gauḍa' of Kāmboja lineage, may be seen in the Dinajpur Rāj Palace garden[1] (Pl. XL, 96). The base and the top are square, but the shaft is dodecagonal. The base consists of a square section enclosing a richly ornamented vase out of which issues a luxuriant foliage that adorns the lower part of the base. At the bottom of the base are two *gaṇa* figures, seated back to back, at each corner. The bottom of the shaft on each face shows a lotus stem, alternated by a vertical creeper design, issuing out of the foliated ornament of the vase. Almost near the top, the shaft is encircled by a band consisting of a series of *kīrtimukhas*, from the mouths of which hang down elegant beaded loops with intervening tasselled beaded cords supporting a bell. The capital is made up of a 'compressed vase,' indented like an *āmalaka-śilā*, the base of which shows rich arabesque work on each side. By the richness of its decoration and on account of its association with an historical inscription, this pillar stands out as a prominent landmark. The decorative patterns may be said to be characteristic of the period (approximately 10th century A.D., *supra* p. 133) and may be seen, with slight modifications and variations, on other contemporary examples.

A remarkable wooden pillar, discovered from a tank at Ārial in the district of Dacca, is a fine example of wood-carver's art in ancient Bengal.[2] This, along with two more wooden pillars and other examples of wooden sculptures now in the Dacca Museum, amply testifies to the prolific use of this material in the structural and plastic arts of the province. Actual specimens are, however, very rare on account of the fragile nature of the material. The Ārial pillar (Pl. XL, 97) is about ten feet in height with a diameter of about two feet. Of pleasing proportions, it represents a type, slightly different from that of the Kāmboja pillar, though it is as richly decorated as the latter. The base, as usual, is square in section, but the shaft and the capital are respectively hexagonal and round. The base section (Pl. XLI, 99) consists of the usual ornamental vase with a prominent *kīrtimukha* on each face of the top square section. From the mouths of the *kīrtimukhas* hang

[1] *EISMS.* 157; Pl. LXXXIX(*e*).
[2] *Journal of Arts and Crafts*, III. 5 and plates.

down beaded strings, decorating the sides of the ornamental vase. The bottom section of the shaft shows a triangular design on each face containing circular loops with figures of animals and birds, a pattern that is repeated inversely at the top section. The middle section (Pl. XLI, 100), which is usually left bare, is, however, profusely decorated in this particular pillar and consists of a central moulding with bands of designs on either side. The lower one exhibits a *kīrtimukha* at each corner of the hexagonal section with hanging strings of beads accommodating within each loop the figure of a *gandharva*. The upper band consists of human and animal figures in various attitudes and poses. The top of the shaft (Pl. XLI, 101), above the inverse triangular motifs, is carved with foliage patterns. The capital section (Pl. XLI, 101) is circular and consists of two parts with a recessed moulding in between, the lower one indented exactly in the fashion of an *āmalaka-śilā*, while the upper shows an encircling band of lotus petal design. A notch has been morticed across the capital section to hold a bracket or an architrave, which, however, is missing. In point of well-planned design and bold execution this wooden pillar has no parallel, and it is fortunate that the hand of time, though heavy, has not been able to obliterate it completely.

In connection with this pillar it is interesting to refer to a wooden bracket recovered from Sonārang and now preserved in the Dacca Museum[1] (Pl. XLIV, 106). It is divided into three sections, the central one of which consists of a square panel depicting a figure of Vishṇu, seated in *yogāsana*. The two sections at either end have been cut away at an angle of 45° and the ends have been rolled up. It appears that similar wooden brackets fixed on tops of pillars were in use to support the architraves or lintels in a building made either of brick or stone.

The four stone pillars, originally from Hāndiāl in the district of Pabna, and now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta[2] (Pl. XXIX. 72), represent a rather rare type that is not usually met with. Stylistically they may be dated towards the end of the 12th century A.D. The square base is quite plain except for a decorated niche on each face containing the figure of a deity. The shaft is dodecagonal up to about the three-fourths of its height, the rest being circular. The bottom is decorated with a raised band, bearing in relief twelve dancing female figures. This feature may also be inferred to have characterised an extremely mutilated example from

[1] Bhatt.-*Cat.* 228, Pl. LXXIV; *EISMS.* Pl. XLV(*a*).
[2] *EISMS.* 157-58, Pl. XCIV(*d*).

Bāngarh (Dinajpur), now in the Rajshahi Museum. From a mass of arabesque at the top of the dodecagonal portion hangs a chain with a bell on each of its four facets. The circular portion bears three encircling bands set up one above the other.

Apart from architectural supports, independent free-standing pillars, crowned by some sort of finials, usually the figure of Garuḍa, the carrier of Vishṇu, were also installed in front of temples. These pillars, too, mostly belonged to the usual decorative pattern, described above. For example, we may mention the Garuḍa pillar, now in the Dinajpur Rāj palace garden,[1] and the fragmentary pillar from Pāikore (Birbhum), bearing the inscription of *Rājā* Karṇa.[2] A plain round shape may be seen in the famous Garuḍa pillar of Bhaṭṭa Guravamiśra at Bādāl (Dinajpur), of which the top and the finial are now missing, and in the upper part of a monolith bearing an image of Manasā found at Pāikore.[3] The so-called Kaivartta pillar, standing in the middle of a tank (Dhīvar-dighī) in Dinajpur(Pl. XL, 98), presents a plain hexagonal shape all through, with a peculiar cap-like ornament at the top.

The mediaeval Orissan temple usually shows the figure of a lion, either singly or rampant upon an elephant, projecting from each face of the tower. The *rekha* temples of ancient Bengal, now extant, do nowhere exhibit such a feature, though some of the later temples of the type usually belonging to the 14th or 15th centuries A.D. (*e.g.* the Barākar temples Nos. 1, 2 and 3) follow the Orissan practice of providing a projecting figure of a lion about the middle height of the tower on each face. That such a custom might also have existed in ancient Bengal may be inferred from a huge architectural stone, discovered from Maldah and now preserved in the Rajshahi Museum (Pl. XLIII. 103).[4] At one extremity there has been carved the fore-part of a rampant lion, no doubt as a projecting bracket on the body of the tower. The major portion of the stone has been left undressed, apparently because this part, being encased in masonry, was not meant to be seen.

The next important architectural member executed in stone was the door-frame of temples, consisting of a pair of upright jambs capped by a lintel. A number of such jambs and lintels have come down to us from different parts of Bengal, but complete sets are comparatively rare and can only be seen in the immense door-frames recovered from Bāngarh (Dinajpur) and re-erected in the Dinajpur Rāj palace. The jambs exhibit several vertical bands, usually

[1] *VRS.M.* No. 4, p. 29, Figs. 2-3.
[2] *ASI.* 1921-22, p. 79.
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] *EISMS.* Pl. LXXIII(c).

decorated with different patterns, and this scheme of decoration is continued horizontally on the lintel, which moreover contains a niche in the centre occupied by the figure of the deity, installed in the sanctum, or of Gaṇeśa, the bestower of success. The bottom of the jamb sometimes shows the figure of an attendant deity or of the river-goddesses, each in a sculptured niche, over which the usual decorations begin. The simple and common type of the door-frames exhibits a division of the surface into several vertical bands, in the form of running offsets, such bands being carried over to the lintel. The huge black basalt jamb from Raotal Gandhasāil in the Rajshahi district, and now in the Rajshahi Museum, represents such a plain type, but with a serpent carved in relief on the outer band. A slightly decorated and more developed type may be seen in a group of door-frames, where the plainness of the band on the outer edge is relieved by division into different parts effected by simple mouldings, each part being carved in very low relief with what looks like two elephants, face to face, with the trunks intertwined. The vertical bands provided enough scope for the artists and gradually the whole surface came to be covered with profuse ornamentations. A very elegant specimen of a jamb, hailing from Māndoil (Rajshahi) and now in the Rajshahi Museum, may be regarded as characteristic of the group (Pl. XLIII. 105)[1] At the bottom towards the inner edge is an ornamental niche with a trefoil arch containing the figure of a Śivagaṇa. Over this niche run three vertical bands with two others on the outer edge. These bands, from the inner edge, consist of an arabesque, a row of lotus petals, a row of female figures one above the other, a row of round and diamond-shaped rosettes and finally a twisted bead-rope pattern with a bearded dwarf at the bottom. The lintel corresponding to this jamb shows the above decorations horizontally with the figure of a *liṅga* within a trefoil niche in the centre, signifying thereby that the temple, to which it belonged, was dedicated to the worship of Śiva. The fine execution and the chaste decorative patterns make the piece one of the best specimens of door-frames in the province. A rather over-ornamented type may be seen in the huge Nāga-darwāzā, "the serpent gate-way," in the Dinajpur Rāj palace (Pl. XLII, 102). A lintel from Gaur, now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta (Pl. XLIV, 107),[2] is of particular interest as not conforming to the usually known decorative scheme. There is no division of the surface into receding bands, but a graceful decorative design may be found in the arched panel with triangular spandrels at the corners. The left

[1] *EISMS.* 160, Pl. LXXXIX(*c*).
[2] *EISMS.* p. 161, Pl. XC(*b*).

spandrel accommodates a *gandharva* couple, and the right a pair of *kinnara* and *kinnarī* with musical instruments. Inside the arch there are three niches, each accommodating a figure. The central niche shows the standing figure of Brahmā[1] with four hands testifying to the fact that it belonged to a shrine of Brahmā, rather a rare thing in the period. The beautiful scroll-work on the arched face, remarkable for its perfect drawing and elegant execution, and the group below, arranged in different niches, with graceful and rythmic dance-poses at the extremities, exhibit the artist's skill and sense of composition, and give us an idea of the grace and magnificence of the temple, of which it once formed a part.

Along with the door-frames should also be mentioned the several niche-pilasters that have been discovered from the Sundarbans (Pl. XXIX. 71 and 73).[2] Niches, it should be observed, formed a distinctive element in Indian temple architecture. They had also an important place in the temples of ancient Bengal. At Pāhārpur they appear as regular sunken panels, flanked by decorative stone pilasters. Sometimes when the supply of stone fell short the decorative patterns of the stone pilasters were copied in terracotta and not infrequently an arched frame was provided for at the top. Subsequently, niches usually consisted of a trefoil shaped frame with two pilasters supporting the arch overhead. The Sundarban pilasters appear to belong to this group and exhibit the decorative motifs usually seen on the stelae of contemporary images—*Gajasiṁha, haṁsa, etc.* The bold draughtsmanship and elegant execution speak eloquently for the skill of the artist and for the richness of the buildings to which they belonged.

[1] Mr. R. D. Banerji takes it as Vishṇu (*EISMS.* 161, Pl. xc.*b*).
[2] *VRSM.* No. 3, Fig. 2.

II. SCULPTURE

I. Introduction

In Ancient India architecture and sculpture almost inevitably went hand in hand. In view, therefore, of what has been said above in respect of the antiquity of religious buildings, the art of sculpture must have been fairly developed during or even before the Gupta period. Unfortunately, specimens of sculpture, that can be definitely dated before the 6th or 7th century A.D., are very few. Apart from the influence of the damp climate of Bengal upon terracotta and brick, which were presumably the chief materials available to sculptors in the early period, an important reason for the comparative paucity of early specimens of art in our province has to be sought for in the lack of proper scientific and systematic excavation of ancient sites in Bengal. Most of the specimens of Bengal sculpture, besides those in modern temples or found lying above ground, are mere chance finds from tanks and ditches, or exacavated from the upper stratum of the soil. That is one reason why we have so many specimens of the latest periods of art, and so few of the earlier.

II. Early Terracottas : Śuṅga Affiliation

The oldest specimen, yet known, of Bengal sculptures, is a couple of stray terracotta picked up from Pokharnā (Bankura) the ancient Pushkaraṇā (*supra* p. 48), and Tamluk (Midnapur) the ancient Tāmralipti. The Pokharnā find, now housed in the Asutosh Museum of Indian Art, Calcutta University (Pl. XLV, 109), exhibits definite Śuṅga characteristics so familiar to us from the Bhārhut railings. With its lower part broken, it represents a standing female figure (6″) perhaps a Yakshiṇī, with a head-dress fashioned exactly on the Bhārhut model. Her right hand lifts a portion of the skirt in an angle, and the left, resting in akimbo, holds a *śuka* bird. Her heavy neck-ornament, arranged in two stages and composed in heavy square units modelled as if in separate plastic volumes, her rounded and stiff pair of breasts similarly modelled, and arrangement of the folds and hangings of the upper and lower garments, all unmistakably reveal her intimate relationship with the Śuṅga idiom of art. The Tamluk piece conforms almost to the same description and exhibits the same characteristics, but it seems to belong to a later date, and is perhaps more closely related with the slightly later Mathurā sculptures.

A burnt clay figure of a female deity, belonging to the Śuṅga or Maurya period, was found at Mahāsthān.[1] Another terracotta figure of the Śuṅga period was also found at the same place.[2] But these are too indistinct to give us any clear idea of the characteristics of the sculpture of the period.

III. KUSHĀN AFFILIATION

Next in point of time are three sculptures[3] which may be said to exhibit some affinities with the art of the Kushān period. Not executed in the red sandstone of Mathurā, they appear to have been the work of local artists. All of them hail from North Bengal, roughly Puṇḍra of ancient times, and are now housed in the Rajshahi Museum. Of these two are representations of Sūrya, one from Kumārpur and the other from Niyāmatpur, both in the Rajshahi district; the third one is of Vishṇu from Hānkrāil in Maldah (Pl. XLV, 110). All these figures are in low flat relief; their sharp and rigid angles and lines help to confine the main effect to the surface. All of them maintain a stern frontality; the accents are always placed on linear effect and not the slightest attempt is made at the rounding of the contours. The features are broad and heavy, with broad shoulders almost in a straight line, and the elbows, making sharp angles, placed at some distance from the bodies. All these features are characteristic of the secular art of the Mathurā school represented by the portrait statues of Kanishka, Huvishka and Chashṭaṇa. The main point of Kushān affinity of the Sūrya figures is the distinctly Kushān dress, a long tunic covering the body from the neck to the knees, as is to be found on the royal portraits on Kushān coins as well as in the portrait statues of the Kushān and Śaka kings. In the Vishṇu image from Hānkrāil, the upper part of the body is bare, but the lower part of the loin-cloth is treated in a fashion which is strongly reminiscent of the lower part of the typical Kushān dress. It is, of course, difficult to label these sculptures as Kushān, but at the same time it is to be admitted that they present favourable points of affinities for assigning them to a period contemporaneous with the Kushān sculptures of Mathurā. The peculiar features noticed above have no parallel in any other school or period of Indian art. It is evident also that these sculptures were the works of local artists

[1] *ASI.* 1930-34, p. 128, Pl. LXII-g.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Supra* pp. 431, 456.

who were only distantly touched by the Mathurā tradition. This is evident from the material used, a kind of buff-coloured sandstone, as well as from the crude, coagulated and unsophisticated appearance and treatment of the sculptures themselves.

More distantly related in time with Kushān-Mathurā, but inwardly connected more closely with the consciously sensuous and sophisticated female figures on the railings from Mathurā, are the terracotta pieces recently collected from the ruins of Bāngarh (Dinajpur) and now housed in the Asutosh Museum (Pl. XLV, 108). Three pieces are noteworthy, of which the two smaller ones (3″×2¾″) seem to have been cast from the same mould, and the third (5¼″×3¼″), preserved up to the knees, though from a different mould, exhibits the same motif in a remarkably similar formula. Standing in slight *ābhaṅga, a* young lady, with regular features, fully ornamented, and a pleasing face, lifts her right hand on a level with her heavy hair-dress, and keeps her left in what seems to have been in akimbo. She has lost the heaviness of the girdle as well as the fullness and roundness of the breasts of her Mathurā sisters, but retains the characteristically Mathuraesque elaborate girdle-ornament and the general sensuousness of the physiognomical form, though in a subdued manner. But the slightly drooping breasts, regularity of features, softness of the modelling of contours, and the subdued sensuousness of form seem to indicate the evolution of the Bengal school towards the common Gupta idiom of art.

IV. THE GUPTA IDIOM

The Kushān art of Mathurā had its logical culmination in the Gupta art whose main centre was at Sārnāth, though it sent out its radiations almost all over Northern India. The heavy, solidly built, earthly and stolid Buddha-Bodhisattva type of Mathurā gradually transformed itself into the delicate, reposeful and highly spiritual Buddha type of the Gupta school. The intensely human gestures and features of the Mathurā type, expressive of enormous energy, gives way to a type of human representation, absorbed in meditation and fully expressive of inner spiritualisation. The Gupta type "is characterised by a dignity in which metaphysical knowledge and spiritual charm equally contribute to the mature freedom and disciplined mastery of form."[1]

The influence of Sārnāth travelled eastwards as far as Tezpur in Assam. Of the sculptures of the Gupta period found in Bengal,

[1] Kramrisch, *Rūpam*, No. 40, p. 108.

the standing image of Buddha from Bihārail[1] (Pl. XLVI, 112) may be regarded as the best, and stylistically the earliest, being datable not later than the early 5th century A.D. Executed in Chunar sandstone, the type closely resembles the contemporary images from Sārnāth.[2] In spite of its sad mutilations, one can easily notice the soft poise and balance, and the smooth and subdued modelling of the whole figure. A mood of calm and peaceful contemplation, the spirit of *dhyāna-yoga*, and a refined delicacy of the fleshliness of the human form and a flowing linearism find a graceful expression within a disciplined outline. The affiliation with Sārnāth is more than evident even in the sublimation of the emotional traits that differentiate a typical Sārnāth Buddha from the standing image of the Buddha in copper from Sultānganj in Bhagalpur or from the stucco figures of Maṇiyār Maṭh at Rājgir.

The Deorā (Bogra) image of Sūrya (*supra* p. 456) in bluish basalt seems to belong to the "eastern version" of the Gupta tradition. In point of style and execution this image can be dated in the 6th century A.D., having general resemblance with those of the panels in the Gupta temple at Deogarh, or with the recently discovered image of Vishṇu from Mathurā. The prominent *trivalī* marks, the paucity of ornaments, and strict simplicity of design, coupled with the circular halo with only a beaded border, and the long wigs falling on the shoulders, are strongly reminiscent of the typically Gupta tradition and tendency, but at the same time one cannot fail to notice that there is a warm sensuousness in the fleshliness of the torso. The sublimations of Sārnāth seem to have been endowed with an emotional and sensuous touch which is equally noticeable in the deep shadows below the eyes and round the lips.

A higher aesthetic and spiritual consciousness pervades the sublime Sūrya figure that hails from Kāśīpur in the Sundarbans, now in the Asutosh Museum (Pl. XLVII, 115). The soft but restrained emotionalism of the eastern version of the Gupta tradition is nowhere, in known specimens from Bengal, more evident than in this image. A little earlier in date, the Kāśīpur Sūrya shows almost the same iconographic, stylistic and physiognomical form as that of the Deorā Sūrya referred to above, but the modelling here is of a more sensitive quality, execution more refined, and the inwardness of conception more evident.

1 *Supra* p. 466.

2 In view of this resemblance and the material used, *viz.*, Chunar sandstone, the possibility of the image being imported from Sārnāth is not altogether excluded.

This emotionalism and warm sensuousness of the modelling are equally noticeable in the gold-plated bronze image of Mañjuśrī (Pl. XLVI, 111 and 113) picked up from the Balāidhāp mound, (*supra* p. 466). The eastern version of the Gupta tradition has left its trace in the fleshy rounded face and the thick lower lip, in the pointed tips of fingers bent backward, and in the soft sensuous modelling of the entire frame controlled within a slim well-defined form. The close-fitting drapery and the general style of work, the paucity of ornaments coupled with a simplicity of design, are all characteristic of early Gupta workmanship indicating a date not later than the 6th century A.D.

The general tendencies of art specimens of Bengal belonging to the 5th and 6th centuries are, therefore, clear; they belong to the common denominator of contemporary Indian art, and exhibit the well-known characteristics of the Sārnāth school combined with the emotionalism of its eastern version in a more or less degree. It is interesting to note that almost all the art specimens of this period that we know of from Bengal hail from the ancient Puṇḍravardhana-*bhukti*[1] which was in continuous possession of the Guptas for a much longer period than any other part of Bengal (*supra* Ch. IV).

V. Period of Transition

The 6th century saw the culmination of the classical Gupta tradition in India, but already in the succeeding century inertia sets in and a drowsy heaviness of form overtakes the art. New energy seems to seek expression which must have been due to contacts with different local traditions that gradually began asserting themselves. In Bengal we have a few specimens of this stage of Indian plastic art, of which three are worth mentioning. Of these, two octo-alloy images were unearthed together from Deulbāḍī (Tippera) *viz.* an eight-handed gilt image of the goddess Sarvāṇī (Pl. LX, 147) bearing an inscription of queen Prabhāvatī, wife of king Devakhaḍga (*supra* pp. 86-87), and a miniature, about six inches in height, representing the Sun-god Sūrya, seated cross-legged in his car drawn by seven horses (*supra* p. 457). The third, a bronze Śiva (Pl. VII, 20), was found at Manirhāt, Jayanagar (24-Parganas). The first image was stolen,[2] the second is exhibited in the Dacca Museum, and the third

[1] A miniature image of Siṁhavāhinī at Pokharnā has been referred by some to the Gupta period on grounds of style. But the image is so hopelessly mutilated that it hardly lends itself to a correct stylistic analysis.

[2] The thief has recently been caught with the image.

is now in the collection of Mr. Ajit Ghosh of Calcutta. The change that Gupta classical tradition had undergone in the meanwhile is clearly visible in all these images. The stiff and the erect Sarvāṇī is but a forerunner of the conventional Pāla image, and the surrounding rim, to which the goddess's hands and other decorative designs serve as struts, anticipates the Pāla stele composition. This is equally true of the entire composition of the miniature Sūrya image. The approach towards Pāla art is evident; equally evident is the slowing down of the high-tide of Gupta tradition, and very little remains in these images of the latter's refined sensuousness and sensitive abstractions.

A few specimens of this phase of Indian plastic art and its derivations are to be found at Pāhārpur; but Pāhārpur provides much more than this. It presents a much fuller expression of the culture-complex of Bengal for at least two centuries, and therefore demands a fuller and more elaborate treatment.

VI. Pāhārpur

The stupendous shrine at Pāhārpur (*supra* pp. 504 ff.) was built in the 8th century A.D. Apart from the numerous terracottas which decorate the faces of the walls in regular rows, there are as many as sixty-three stone sculptures all around the basement wall of the main temple. The general disposition of these sculptures, and the great probability that they belong to different periods, have been discussed above (p. 509). While there may be difference of opinion regarding the last point,[1] one cannot but distinguish in these sculptures three distinct groups with marked difference in style and artistic excellence.

The first group containing the large majority of sculptures, mostly in the niches at the projecting corners, but not unoften also in some of the intermediate niches, of almost the same size and executed in greyish or white or spotted sandstone, was undoubtedly executed synchronously with the building of the monument itself. They tell a large variety of tales. A considerable number depicts scenes from the life of Kṛishṇa,—not the Kṛishṇa of the Brahmanical

[1] Mr. Dikshit (*Paharpur*, 37-38) seems to refer all the sculptures to a single period, though he is somewhat doubtful. Dr. Kramrisch was originally in favour of grouping them into two or three different periods (*Rūpam*, No. 40, p. 108), but later changed her opinion and attributed the divergence in style to different trends or traditions (*Indian Sculpture*, p. 216). Mr. S. K. Saraswati (*Sculpture*. Chs. IV-VII) has fully discussed this question and maintains that the sculptures belong to three or at least two different periods.

hierarchy, but Krishṇa of every Bengali house-hold,—the eternal lover, the eternal pet child of the mother,—and some of his exploits as the divine hero. There are some other panels again which can be recognised as having connection with several themes of the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa* (Pl. XLVII, 116), themes that have the most popular appeal to the ordinary men and women even to this day. Besides, there is quite a good number that represents women in graceful dancing poses, *dvārapālas* with curly wigs resting on their staffs (Pl. XLVII, 114), men and women making love to each other (Pl. XLVIII, 117), and various other incidents from daily life of the humble village folk. The people that take part in these scenes seldom use fine girdles and ornaments, but wear plain and scanty clothes; they exhibit no inwardness of thought or expression, nor do they show any trace of refined sensitiveness or cultured sophistication. Their features and appearances are exceptionally heavy and perhaps sometimes crude, without any proportion or definition of form. When standing they carry a rather stiff and weighty bust on two column-like legs tapering towards the ankles. Their sharply defined features hardly exhibit any modelling that gives a plastic effect. Their heavy drapery hangs down, covering completely the body underneath, and is indicated by parallel lines at the hangings; in majority of instances a close-fitting tunic (Pl. XLVIII, 118) reaching above the knee, clings fast to the waist and thighs. Big and bulging eyes, coupled with a perfectly crescent-shaped mouth carved on a full round face, produce an unsophisticated, almost naïve, expression lit up with the simple joy that was theirs. They tell us whatever they have to, fully and frankly.

A very deep artistic significance attaches to these sculptures so full of lively action, free and dynamic movement, and simple but complete and superb expressiveness. Free from the trammels of religious and iconographic tradition gathered in the *Śilpaśāstras* and *Pratimālakshaṇa* texts, the art of these sculptures derives its inspiration directly from the life around through keen observation, and it is the immediate experience and dynamism of daily life itself that is imparted into them with all its joys and sorrows, mirth and humour. The realities of the daily life of the common people form the social content of this art, technically so crude and imperfect but so intensely human, so highly expressive of life, and artistically so significant.

Very intimately connected with this group of stone sculptures is the very large number of terracotta plaques (Pl. XLIX-LII, LIV-LV) that decorate the faces of the walls or have been picked up loose from the site. Even when they are in their original positions, it is difficult to establish any sequence of subjects that might originally

have been intended. But even as they are, they exhibit the same character as the stone sculptures described above. Exuberant in the richness of their subject-matter, the terracotta artists at Pāhārpur were fully responsive to their environment. Their fancy and imagination seem to revel in the joy, mirth and sorrow of men and nature around. No subject was too small or unworthy of attention for them. Scenes from the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Kṛishṇa* legend abound, Kṛishṇa taken as a member of every-day life. Well-known stories from the *Pañchatantra* (Pl. LIV, 133) or from the *Bṛihatkathā* are represented with evident humour and picturesque expressiveness. Men and women of primitive tribes (Pls. LII, 127 ; LV, 137) inhabiting outlying regions of Bengal are represented with all their local and ethnical characteristics. Composite animals and semi-divine and semi-human figures (Pl. XLIX, 120) and *gandharvas* are depicted with as much interest as is evident in the various movements associated with different occupations of daily life ; men seated on their haunches ; acrobats balancing their body on their hands or attempting difficult feats ; women with children in arms or drawing water from a well or carrying pitchers and entering their hamlets ; warriors both male and female (Pls. LII, 127 ; LIII, 128 ; LV, 136) ; archers mounted on four-wheeled chariots ; travelling mendicants with long beards and bent bodies, reduced to skeleton, carrying staff in their hands, their belongings hanging from either ends of a pole carried on their shoulders (Pl. L, 122) ; Brāhmaṇas practising rituals ; cultivators carrying ploughs ; musicians, both men and women, with their instruments (Pls. LI, 124 ; LII, 126 ; LV, 134, 135) and so on. In fact, every conceivable subject of ordinary human life finds its place on these plaques. They also represent the entire animal world and the flora of the country. Lion, tiger, buffalo (Pl. LIV, 131), antelope (Pl. LIV, 130), jackal, elephant, bear, monkey (Pls. LII, 125 ; LIV, 132), mongoose, cobra, lizard, hare etc., are all very naturalistically depicted in their peculiar movements and characteristics required by the subject-matter. Similarly we find ducks and geese, fish and tortoise in their typical actions and movements. Gods and goddesses abound[1]—Śiva in those manifestations that are still popular in Bengal villages, Brahmā, Vishṇu and Gaṇeśa. Buddhist deities, mostly of the Mahāyāna school of Buddhism, including Bodhisattva Padmapāṇi, Mañjuśrī and Tārā also appear here and there. But such representations of divinities of hierarchical religion are few and far between.

The essential nature of the terracotta art of Pāhārpur is wholly popular, and it derives its inspiration from the mind and imagina-

[1] These have been dealt with in Ch. XIII., Part II (Iconography).

tion of the simple village folk. That it draws directly from the daily life of the people is evident from the intense human interest taken by the artists of these plaques in all created objects of nature, in all stages of rest and movement, in all expressions of emotion and in all possible and impossible situations. Their mind seems to roam from one to the other end of their daily world of emotional and intellectual experience. It is impossible to find in the hieratic religious art of India at any given period such a large social content, such variety of human feelings, such intimacy of contact with the events and experiences of daily life, such spontaneous actions and movements, depicted with such powerful effect and purposeful rhythm. These artists, simple village-folk, living on the patronage of their poor village, with simple tools and the easily available material of mud and clay from the village tank or river at their disposal, do not and cannot lay claim to any technical perfection, or higher emotional or intellectual experience, but no one can deny that they had a very keen observation of nature in its widest sense, and an absorbing interest in life. More than any other tradition or school in Indian art, these plaques give us a true insight into the real social life of the people of Bengal in those days. We can visualise through them how the common people lived their lives away from the courts and aristocratic environments, and we can catch a glimpse of the social and thought-content of the ordinary men.

The majority of these terracotta plaques are contemporaneous with the building of the monument itself and must be dated not later than the last half of the 8th century A.D. Men and women represented on them bear a well-defined physiognomical form with a bust gradually attenuating towards the waist. The modelling shows little flexibility except at the waist and abdomen, but their plasticity is revealed in their variegated movements and actions. Their fingers and toes are, as it were, only indicated, not modelled; big eyes with almost bulging eye-lids are set in an almost full face with an open mouth defined by two full rounded lips. Breasts of women are full and round, and the garments are almost invariably heavy and treated as separate plastic volumes, though not unoften the artist reveals an understanding of the anatomy of human and animal form.

As already noted, these terracotta plaques belong to the same trend of art as the stone sculptures themselves discussed above. Both undoubtedly are the art of the common people and both reveal the same characteristics not only in their quality of dynamism, actions and movements but in their subject-matter, their technique and general appearance as well. The fact that the craftsmanship of the stone sculptures seems to be more crude and heavy than

that of the terracottas has to be explained by the difference in materials. These folk artists who usually practised their skill in the easily pliable material of soft clay could not evidently exercise their tools with the same ease on stone; but even then there is hardly any essential difference. It is, however, curious how the simple village artists were given so wide a scope to exercise their skill on a monument directly-patronised by the king and the upper gentry and evidently controlled by a hierarchical religious order. All the more curious it is when we place this fact against the background of our knowledge of other phases and periods of Indian art, where we find an art which is not the direct product of the common people, but of the court, the cult and the merchant guilds who happened to be the usual patrons of art.

It is evident that this art of the people must have existed in Bengal in the earlier periods as well, but it could hardly assert itself against the hieratic art of the earlier periods and of the upper classes. The people's art practised by the people themselves was almost invariably obliged to confine itself in the villages where it was generally practised in mud and straw, in terracotta or scroll paintings and other simple village decorations. It is by sheer chance that at Pāhārpur we meet with this art coming to the fore and finding scope to exhibit itself on a monument brought into existence by the king and the court. But this happened only for once so far as we know, and then again it goes back to its own fold, and for many centuries we have no more glimpse of it. Nevertheless it seems that the idea travelled further east, in the Indian cultural colonies, for example in Burma, where in the two Petleik Pagodas, in the Ānanda and some other monuments of Pagan we meet with terracotta plaques decorating the outer walls, revealing the same dynamic movement and expressive of popular fancy and imagination. In Bengal itself the Pāla and Sena school of art, definitely a hieratic school, gave this art of the people very little scope for coming to the fore. Centuries later, when politically Bengal was only very loosely connected with a king and a court or with any hierarchic religious order, we find the art again asserting itself in the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries. There was hardly any strong local central authority in the province, and whatever there was, was more or less of a popular character. Members of alien faith and tradition, who had come to exercise political power, allied themselves more with the culture of the common folk than with that of the gentry and the merchant class. It is during these centuries that a vernacular literature fully expressive of the emotions and experiences of the ordinary people came into existence, and left its rich legacy in our rich ballad literature, in the Maṅgala-*Kāvyas*, in the verses of the seasons, in the

popular versions of the epics, and so on. Parallel with this growth of popular vernacular literature we find also the revival of the people's art. In a number of post-Muhammadan temples in Faridpur, Jessore, Burdwan, Birbhum, 24-Parganas and other districts of Bengal, we find a wealth of terracotta decorations in which all the characteristics of the people's art are in view, and the same characteristics can be traced as late as the 19th century in the scroll-paintings and book-covers recovered from various places of the province. Almost untouched by the hieratic art of the court and the cult this art of the people retained its genuineness and undiluted character.

Coming back to a consideration of the other two groups of stone sculptures at Pāhārpur one is struck by the world of difference in attitude, subject-matter, temperament and general technique between these two groups and the one just discussed above. Most of the sculptures of these two groups (groups 2 and 3) depict cult divinities, not always strictly according to canonical texts, but on the whole conforming to the dictates of the Brahmanical hierarchy. Artistically, too, their attitude is much more sophisticated, and they attempt to achieve a standard of dignity, grace and refinement which are definite characteristics of a people of higher breed and of the upper classes of society.

The third group, which is best represented by the so-called Rādhā-Krishṇa (?) group (Pl. LVII, 142), the Yamunā (Pl. LVIII, 144), Śiva (Pl. LVII, 141), and Balarāma (Pl. LVIII, 143) reliefs, shows the soft and tender modelling and the refinement and delicacy of features which we generally associate with Gupta classicism. Besides a soft sensuous modelling, which gives an impression of elasticity and pliability, we find a pleasing physiognomical form exhibiting broad chest smoothly gliding to a narrow waist, a diaphanous drapery clinging fast to the body in spite of parallel folds, and an elegant taste in ornamentation and a soft flowing line in individual as well as in general features. All these help to accentuate an attitude of intense grace and dignified expression. It is in this small group again that the inner spiritualism of the Sārnāth school is still apparent, and may be felt in combination with the warm sensuousness and emotionalism of its eastern version. In this respect, and in point of general execution and treatment, this group of sculptures at Pāhārpur is not very much unlike the stucco reliefs of Maṇiyār Maṭh of Rājgir or the Mañjuśrī of Mahāsthān, and cannot be far removed from them in date. Most probably they are earlier in date than the stone sculptures of the first group and the terracottas, and their positions in the basement walls of the monument can be best explained by the theory of later insertions (*supra*

p. 509) of materials gathered from the remains of earlier monuments. Otherwise we are bound to presume the existence, side by side, of an indigenous folk-art, and a developed hieratic art deriving its inspiration from the classic art of the Gupta period.

The second group of sculptures at Pāhārpur, of which there are about one and a half dozen specimens (Pl. LVI, 138-40), is marked by a general heaviness all through, including the drapery and the ornaments which appear to be rather coarse. One or two panels are marked by lively action and movement, but in the case of single standing figures, in spite of their slight *ābhaṅgas*, there is a dull rigidity, and due to the stiffening of the pose, the legs, with slight or no modelling at all, look more like posts supporting a rather heavy torso. The refinement and delicacy of the third group is lost in the flabby and distended physiognomical form which hardly reveals any plasticity of modelling. The soft gliding linearism of the Gupta tradition that one notices in the so-called Rādhā-Kṛishṇa group appears at times to be sharply broken. The mouth is a perfect crescent even on a specimen that retains much of the Gupta heritage in physiognomical features and plastic effect. While the fingers in certain cases are so modelled as to give an effect of soft sensitiveness, the toes are almost invariably only indicated by incisions and are heavy and crude at the extreme. The eye-brows set on a broad and not unoften heavy face are more strongly curved, and in a majority of cases the incised line above gives them a modelled effect.

We have already noticed that the third group of sculptures, which have but few specimens to offer, may be taken to represent the eastern version of the classical Gupta tradition. The second group, however, seems to have drawn part of its inspiration from eastern Gupta tradition, but basically it seems to have been evolved from the sculptures of the first group. This second group then represents a compromise between the tradition of Gupta sculptures and indigenous Bengali form as represented by the first group. It is quite possible that the second and the third groups belong to the same period, say, the 7th century A.D., and the distinction in style and workmanship between the two groups can be explained if we assume the third as an eastern version of the Gupta trend and the second as the result of the indigenous trend of the first group coming into contact with that of the third and evolving a new form. In this process of evolution the trend represented by the second group lost the lively action and spontaneous expression of the indigenous tradition, but gained from the East Indian Gupta tradition a certain technical perfection and a more or less still and conventionalised physiognomical form. It is from this trend repre-

sented by the second group that we may trace the beginnings of the stiff, erect, somewhat sophisticated and conventionalised cult images of the Pāla and Sena periods, one of the earliest versions of which one can see in the stone Vishṇu image from Kākadighi (Dinajpur; Pl. LXI, 148). The new tendency thus evolved sacrificed the movement, action and expression of indigenous tradition to an unsatisfactory imitation of physical form and comparative perfection of technique of the Gupta art. This new tendency, which dominates the artistic expression of the hieratic art of Bengal in subsequent centuries, threw the indigenous tradition into the background. The tendency of the first group, however, did not altogether die out and continued its influence, though in a less degree.

VII. RISE OF THE EASTERN INDIAN SCHOOL OF ART

For a whole millennium, from the 3rd century B.C. to roughly about the 7th century A.D., Indian art admits of a common denominator of the stages in its development. In political history as well, the ideal of an all-India suzerainty looms large throughout the millennium. The local spirit and regional characteristics no doubt influenced both political and cultural ideals; nevertheless an all-India character may be discerned in emotional, intellectual and spiritual expressions, of which Gupta classicism in the literature of Kālidāsa, the sculptures of Sārnāth, and the paintings of Ajantā were superb climaxes. Towards the end of the 7th and beginning of the 8th century A.D., the history of India begins to take a swerve in another direction. For one or two centuries more the ideal of an all-India sovereignty still lingers, but the regional spirit gradually got the better of the Indian in all spheres of life. In the political sphere different kingdoms begin slowly to evolve a consciousness of their respective frontiers, and this regional outlook gradually reacts on different aspects of culture as well. The local scripts and dialects begin to take definite shapes during the next two centuries, and it is in this formative period that we have to seek for the genesis of all major languages and alphabets of mediaeval and modern India. The same thing is true of Indian art as well, and in Bengal the Pāla period ushered in a local school which developed its own characteristics and continued till the end of the Hindu period. It is not necessary for our present purpose to dwell on the various factors that led to this important change. Our task is only to indicate the changes that reflected themselves in the sphere of art as practised in Bengal, which, together with Bihar and Assam, evolved, during 800-1200 A.D., what may be called the Eastern Indian School of

mediaeval art. As already noted above, the Pālas ruled in Bengal and Bihar during nearly the whole of this period, and occasionally exercised suzerainty over Assam.

VIII. Sociological Background of Pāla and Sena Sculpture

The Pāla kings were professedly Buddhists, and though Buddhist establishments seem to have received their direct patronage, the majority of the people remained within the fold of Brahmanism. Pāla art and culture seem to have thrived not so much on the patronage of the court as on that of the rich individuals, and derived its strength and inspiration chiefly from the private wealth and exigencies of religious cults.

There was a change in the attitude of the court during the reign of the Senas. They seem to have developed a rather pompous and luxurious court-life and with it a highly sophisticated and high-brow aesthetic taste, that delighted in over-sensitiveness of form and gestures, a sensuous worldliness and meticulous details of ornamentation. This is reflected in the high-flown and rich ornamental Sanskrit that developed in the Sena court as well as in the art of the period.

The art of Bengal during these four centuries is essentially religious, and inevitably reflects the religious experience of past centuries; not the religious experience of any individual, but the integrated experience of the cults themselves. Gods and goddesses, whether Buddhist or Brahmanical or Jaina, have all well-established iconographic types which are never transformed, except in minor details, by any peculiar personal artistic experience.

It is obvious that only those who could afford to pay the artist, and defray the expenses of materials for the making of the image and its installation for purposes of worship, had the privilege of enjoying the luxury of earning religious merit. This presupposes a prosperous lay community that obeyed the requirements of the cult or cults they belonged to.

The individual donors of images were simple earners of religious merit, in which alone they were interested. As to the making of the image itself they left it to the artist who was guided by the living tradition, the iconographic canon, and a common heritage of artistic conception. Within these limitations the artist and his pupils exercised their skill and craftsmanship, and translated their personal religious experience into objects of art to the best of their ability. The artists ordinarily belonged to a professional class occupying the lower strata of society, and their craft was generally considered low

and not sufficiently respectable.[1] Tāranātha preserves the names of two artists of this period, Dhīmān and his son Bitpālo, who are said to have flourished in the 9th century and founded a school of sculpture, bronze-casting and painting. The name or memory of no other individual artist has been preserved in any record or popular tradition.[2]

The chief factors that created this art of Bengal for four centuries are thus (1) the court; (2) and (3) the cults and their votaries who belonged to prosperous communities with evidently a comparatively higher standard of living; and (4) the artists who in groups and guilds[3] formed a section of the people not generally

[1] Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva, in his *Prāyaśchitta-prakaraṇa* quotes (p. 60), with approval, a passage which gives a list of low castes whose food and profession were forbidden to Brāhmaṇas. The list includes *naṭa, nartaka, takshaka, chitropajīvī, śilpī, raṅgopajīvī, svarṇakāra* and *karmakāra*. On the other hand reference to the chief of the *śilpīs* in Varendra as a *Rāṇaka*, in the Deopārā inscription of Vijayasena, indicates that they sometimes held important office or position in the state.

[2] For Dhīmān and Bitpālo, Cf. *IB.* 45-46. We possess names of several sculptors who engraved inscriptions on stones and copper-plates. Some of them have the designation *śilpī*. In view of the very beautiful engraving and the care taken to mention their names, often along with those of their father and grandfather, in the records, it is legitimate to infer that their activities were not confined to engraving of inscriptions, and they, perhaps, also made stone and metal images. This inference is strikingly confirmed by the reference to the engraver of the Silimpur stone-slab inscription (*EI.* XIII. 283 ff.) in the concluding verse which runs as follows:

"Just as a lover (paints) with rapt attention his own mistress by means of colour-decorations, so also did Someśvara, the Magadha artist (*śilpavin*=*Māgadhaḥ*, where Māgadha seems to be the name of a caste, cf. *infra* p. 568), incise (with rapt attention) this *praśasti* by means of a division of letters."

The poet has here defined very briefly, but in almost inimitable language, the spirit of true art which animated Someśvara, and it is impossible to regard him as a mere craftsman and not an artist of a high order. The names of a few other artists, known from Bengal inscriptions, are noted below:—

1 Tātaṭa, son of Subhaṭa, grandson of Bhogaṭa (Pāla Ins. No. 2).
2 Maṅkha(?)dāsa, son of Śubhadāsa, an inhabitant of Sat-Samataṭa, (*Ibid.* No. 17).
3 Vimaladāsa, son of No. 2 (*Ibid.* No. 23).
4 Vishṇubhadra, the sūtradhāra (*Ibid.* No. 16).
5 Mahīdhara, the *śilpī*, son of Vikramāditya (*Ibid.* No. 31).
6 Śaśideva, the *śilpī*, son of No. 5, who is here referred to as Mahīdharadeva (*Ibid.* No. 39).
7 *Śilpī* Karṇabhadra (*Ibid.* No. 50).
8 *Śilpī* Tathāgatasara (*Ibid.* No. 46).
9 Śūlapāṇi, a Rāṇaka, chief of the guild (*goshṭhī*) of *śilpīs* of Varendra, son of Bṛihaspati, grandson of Manadāsa, and great-grandson of Dharma (Deopārā Ins. of Vijayasena).

[3] Cf. No. 9 in the preceding footnote (*IB.* 46, 49, 56).

considered sufficiently respectable. Evidently enough, these chief factors have hardly any room for the people at large. This art, then, was the art of the higher classes, of the dominant groups of the contemporary socio-economic order, and we have hardly any evidence during these centuries of the art of the common people.

IX. General Features of the Pāla and Sena Sculptures

Generally speaking, the sculptures of the Pāla and Sena epochs are carved out of black-stone *(kashṭi-pāthar)*, either fine or coarse-grained. The metal images are, however, cast in brass or in octo-alloy (*ashṭa-dhātu*). One or two images of gold and silver have also come down to us, and wood carvings also are not unknown.

Usually stone and metal images of this period are all stelae carved in relief, though some figures are modelled in the round. As we march with time during these centuries, the relief becomes more and more independent from the stelae background, so much so that sometimes single metal figures modelled in the round are connected only by struts with the back slab, and in stone stelae the back slab is cut along the edges of the central figures in order to give them an appearance of images in the round. But in spite of its growing independence from the background the figure is bound by two-dimensional restrictions, and the general effect remains flat and compressed into the surface. It is only towards the closing years of the period, in the 12th century, that we come to notice a three-dimensional effect in specimens worked fully in the round and self-assuring in general appearance.

The pivot of Pāla and Sena sculptures is the human figure which combines in itself both spiritual and mundane suggestiveness. This is fully in keeping with canonical injunctions. In any *sādhana,* for example, of a female divinity as laid down in the *Sādhanamālā,* we find that religious abstraction and realistic vision of physical charm and beauty, almost to the point of sensuousness, go hand in hand. This is reflected in iconoplastic representation of the various goddesses as charming female figures. It is true of male divinities as well, whose features have the same full fleshly and graceful roundness of the female body. If heavy round breasts and bulging hips overemphasise the femininity of female figures, full of sensuous suggestiveness, the broad shoulders gradually attenuating to a narrow lion-waist (*siṁha-kaṭi*) accentuate the masculinity of male figures as well, equally suggestive of sensuousness in their fleshly plasticity or in their poses and attitudes. It is not unlikely that this sensuous suggestiveness of a really spiritual mood was due at the bottom to an inner experience of erotic nature, derived from sexual *yoga* or

from Tāntric inspirations. But this inner experience loses its import when it is lifted from the experience itself to the plane of abstraction in a formula enunciated by the authors of the *dhyānas*. With the artists themselves in most cases it was nothing more. Based on actual experience, this tendency towards abstraction is canonised from time to time by respective cults into mathematical precision of proportion, symmetry, balance, repetition and even composition which the average artist followed most scrupulously. Within this canonical framework, the more gifted artist sometimes reveals a grasp of the inner experience, and through his works transfers the same to his less gifted colleagues. This is most perceptible in the rendering of soft fleshliness of different limbs in their fulness, and in the soft and tender roundness of their outlines. As a rule, there is no evidence of a realistic approach to anatomical details, but this is in striking contrast to the attitude revealed in the treatment of ornaments which are always and invariably chiselled with utmost care and almost metallic precision, with all their intricate workmanship.

The attitudes and movements of individual figures are also nothing but translations of inner experience, but again canonised by the respective cults. Such poses and attitudes, *bhaṅgas* and *mudrās*, as we find in Pāla and Sena art were handed down directly from the Gupta tradition that had already evolved the essential art-forms, but it was given to these four centuries of art-activity to exhaust all their latent aesthetic possibilities. Two statical attitudes, that of *samapāda-sthānaka* where two trunk-like, stiff, weighty and massive legs carry a strictly erect bust, and another of *vajra-paryaṅka*,—a seated posture with soles turned upwards and resting on thighs, seem to have been directly derived from a high spiritual experience, that of unshakability in the face of extremes of temptation or anger, happiness or misery, peace or storm, and unchangeability in the midst of the everchanging world outside. On the other hand, male or female associates or counterparts, gods and goddesses that accompany the figure of the main deity in playful *bhaṅgas*, or vegetal designs in luxurious and sensuous curves that decorate the stelae, the *gandharvas* that fly above in apparently carefree and playful manner, are all in deep contrast, in composition and in perception, to the main deity that stands or is seated calm and contemplative with all their weight on earth,—unshakable, immutable, and unchangeable. In the ninth, tenth and eleventh centuries, the accompanying elements, in spite of their seeming exuberance and sensuous luxuriousness, maintain a balance, but in the twelfth, not unoften they simply overwhelm the main figures by their overgrowth.

Of other standing attitudes we know of slight *ābhaṅga* and *tribhaṅga,* of sitting attitudes the *āsana* known as *mahārāja-līlā* or *lalitāsana.* All these are more or less positions of easy and self-conscious gracefulness. There are animated attitudes and those of violent and active movements as well, for example, the *ālīḍha* and *pratyālīḍha* positions, the positions of three-stride Vishṇu or Varāha-Vishṇu or those of flying *gandharvas.* But all such attitudes, whether in rest or in movement, easy or animated, are the outcome of an experience of perfect composure and restfulness. The animated motion of the Varāha-Vishṇu or a flying *gandharva* is but an aspect of the conception of that god or demi-god experienced in imagination; and what seemingly is the movement of a moment is but an inner attitude translated as if it were in a state of movement. That explains why even in an image of violent movement and action as in Mahishamardinī-Durgā or Varāha-Vishṇu, there is no corresponding agitation or animation in their facial expression which is always one of calmness, happiness and bliss, the seeming movement and animation being only in the display of their limbs and in their formal poses and gestures. Not only are these attitudes of divinities dictated by tradition and canonised by the cults, but even the metaphysical interpretation thereof is furnished by them, so that the canons and the images provide for each other their own commentaries.

As already noted above, most of the sculptures are carved on the stelae. In the image of Sarvāṇī from Deulbāḍī (Pl. LX, 147) as well as in the stone-reliefs at Pāhārpur, we have already seen the beginnings of stelae formation. By about the 8th century it came to take its full shape. The middle of the entire composition is always occupied by the figure of the main deity in high relief on a plane with the accompanying lotus-throne. In specimens of the 9th and 10th centuries, the figure forms an integral part of the back slab, but with the progress of time it becomes almost independent of the stelae. On either side the attendant divinities *(parivāra-devatās)* and other accompanying figures are placed on separate lotus pedestals, smaller in size and in lower grades of relief. Below the central figure is the lotus-throne placed on the pedestal which shows on its face and sides *vāhanas* of the divinity represented, or vegetal and ornamental decorations, or simply worshippers with folded hands. Above the main deity is the *prabhāvalī,* particularly in the earlier sculptures where the back of the stelae suggests nothing but the surrounding halo with its border of flames. Later the back of the throne is richly decorated; the leogryph motives on either side of the posts of the throne, the *haṁsa* motives above the throne lintel, *makara* devices and, in later specimens, *kīrtimukhas* play the most

prominent part. Above, to the right and left, *gandharvas* fly in the midst of cloud-motifs in care-free and playful manner. The linear scheme is thus well-determined and whatever freedom there is, can only be found within the rigid outline. In specimens where the main figure stands in *samapāda-sthānaka* or is seated in *lalitāsana* or in *padmāsana,* there is hardly any allowance for strong curves. But even within such strict and rigid linear scheme and severe composition, fluttering scarves and garments, *upavītas* and garlands following the line of the body, the curves of the accompanying figures, the flying *gandharvas* and the vegetal and cloud motifs introduce a certain element of liveliness in the otherwise severe composition. Strong curves in the composition are also noticed when the main figure is one in *atibhaṅga* or *tribhaṅga,* but the main effect of solemn luxuriousness is produced not so much by the main figures, but by the curly exuberance of various decorative motifs, the elaborate jewelleries and the smooth and softly modelled surfaces of the bodies of the attendant deities, all worked out in various grades of reliefs. Different elements forming the composition are knit into one as a single plastic group which is set against the back slab. The decorations at the top in quick succession of surface and depth allow the fullest display of light and shade which are in deep contrast with the large span of surface occupied by the main deity, always kept separate from the rest by a cutting of the back of the slab that follows the outline of the main figure. In specimens where no cutting is resorted to, the main figure fully modelled in the round leaves an open space between itself and the background, offering a depth that heightens the sharpness of its own outline. Sometimes the *parivāra-devatās* are treated in the same way though in a much lesser degree. This allows a considerable display of light and shade which is not a little responsible for the liveliness of the otherwise rigid composition.

X. Evolution of Style: 700-1200 A.D.

Few images that can stylistically be dated in the 8th century are known to us. An important group is comprised by four stone images, one from Boram (Manbhum), two female divinities from Barākar (Burdwan), and an image of Vishṇu from Kākadighi (Dinajpur; Pl. LXI, 148). Stylistically all of them belong to the last phase of Gupta sculpture which is evident from the tender modelling of heavy bodily forms. A boldness of composition in solid masses is particularly noticeable in the stone sculptures. The compositional accents are distributed all over the surface, on the main as well as

on subsidiary figures, and the facial and physiognomical type is also clearly a Gupta survival. The somewhat clumsy scroll decorations on the Barākar examples and the simple jewellery of the divinities point to the early date of the sculptures. The figures are so modelled as to suggest the soft texture of flesh and skin. They are full and heavy and the facial features are more directly connected with contemporary Magadhan specimens.

The somewhat heavy bodily form is also noticeable in the metal images that stylistically belong to the same century. The Sūrya from Deulbāḍī, referred to above, and the Vishṇu from Kumārpur (Pl. LIX, 146), both exhibit a heaviness of form, though in the latter the modelling shows a petrified tendency. The same boldness of composition in solid masses is evident, but there is in the Vishṇu specimen an accentuation of crude angles in the linear composition. The Deulbāḍī example is in the best tradition of the last phase of Gupta sculpture and the tender modelling of the heavy bodily form is more than evident. The beaded decorations, the longitudinal aureoles and the simple ornaments bespeak of an early date for these specimens.

Images definitely dated in the epochs of the Pālas and Senas are rather very rare in Bengal. So far we have only five such specimens: one image of Vishṇu from Bāghāura (Tippera) dated in the third year of the reign of Mahīpāla I (Pl. LXIX, 168); two images—one of Vishṇu (Pl. LXX, 171) and the other of Sūrya (Pl. LXX, 169)—dated in the reign of Govindachandra; an image of Sadāśiva from Rājibpur (Pl. LXXV, 178) now in the Indian Museum and dated in the reign of Gopāla III (*supra* p. 167. f.n. 4); and lastly an image of Chaṇḍī from Dālbāzār, Dacca, dated in the third year of Lakshmaṇasena (Pl. IXXVII, 180). These furnish us with five milestones from about 990 A.D., to 1180 A.D., and help us to determine the stylistic trend with more or less certainty which is further reinforced by dated images from Bihar. For the two preceding centuries, however, Bengal furnishes us with no image definitely datable, and here also we have to turn to Bihar to find out the general denominator of the Eastern School during this period, for Bihar provides us with a considerable number of images dated in the regnal years of Pāla kings. But we must remember that the stylistic evolution in Bihar does not exactly correspond to that in Bengal. In Bihar the Gupta tide and tradition persist for a longer period than in Bengal proper, where the regional element asserts itself with power and strength earlier than was the case in Bihar. There is also a considerable difference in facial features, emotional characteristics and decorative details. But, nevertheless, a common stylistic denominator is admissible which helps to a

certain extent to group specimens found in different places in Bengal in an uninterrupted chronological sequence. To this we are further helped by palaeographic evidence afforded by inscribed images of the period. Moreover, already by the 9th century A.D., the Eastern School in Bengal establishes its standard and evolves its own principles which proceed from stage to stage according to natural laws of evolution.

These stages in the natural process of evolution were sought to be traced for the first time by Dr. Stella Kramrisch, who has gone more deeply into the study of the subject than anybody else. The history of the process, as outlined in details by her, has here been taken fully into consideration, and it is gratifying to find that the natural laws of sculptural evolution as applied by Dr. Kramrisch fit in so well with the indications offered by the few dated sculptures available in Bengal, as well as with those derivable from the dated sculptures of the Mediaeval Eastern School, mainly from Bihar. Indeed these dated sculptures serve as chronological milestones in the history of plastic art in Bengal during these centuries. In outlining this history, therefore, this chronological setting has constantly been kept in mind. The characteristics indicated at each successive stage may not all be applicable in every case to the particular periods to which the sculptures are assigned, but the chronological setting as indicated below is the best that can be offered in the present state of our knowledge, especially as it would at least serve to give an idea of the essential and characteristic changes of the Pāla and Sena sculptures. The following setting should not, therefore, be treated as anything more than a working hypothesis, which is mainly intended to focus the attention upon the essential features of the art of this period, and by bringing the isolated specimens into an ordered scheme, indicate in broad outline the main tendencies that were at the back of this creation in each successive centuries, beginning from the ninth.

Ninth Century A.D.

The 9th century bequeathes to us a number of images, of both stone and metal, dated in the regnal years of Devapāla, Śūrapāla, Nārāyaṇpāla, and the Gurjara-Pratīhāra emperor Mahendrapāla, all, however, from Bihar. Throughout the century the formal appearance of specimens, whether in stone or metal, is one of fleshliness, and even in more or less abstract types a relative softness is attained. The figures (figs. 149, 154, 156) are modelled so as to suggest the soft texture of the flesh and skin. The general tendency is one of

the fulness of modelling. In some, however, this fulness becomes somewhat stiff and coagulated. It is difficult to say whether this denotes the work of a later generation or not. A calm contemplation is on every face, but the modelling of the fleshly body invariably reveals a contented sensuousness. Boldness of plastic conception persists, and the swelling of plastic masses is more evident in the metal images than in the stone ones. The ideal art-form is one of soft fleshliness within definite outlines which is still in the tradition of the late Eastern Gupta version. Very few specimens show an exalted state of mind, though the mild calmness on every face is accentuated by half-closed eyes invariably looking downwards. The plastic conception always favours a rounded modelling which is equally evident in the borders of the stelae. These are in a few instances rendered in bold flat or round mass. The shape of the stelae is generally half-round at the top, occasionally with slight suggestions of a pointed end. The folds of garments cling to the body like a wet sheet, and their folds are indicated by schematic and parallel scratches or ridges with a diaper pattern of rosettes or of lozenge-shapes. The standing position is either one of strict *samapāda-sthānaka,* or one where the weight is placed on one side only, or one of slightest *tribhaṅga.* The sitting position, however, is one of *lalitāsana,* a position of ease, but this shows little pliability and flexion. The positions of hands, legs and fingers *etc.* are dictated by iconographic tradition, while the decorative sensitiveness given to the fingers, and slenderness or plumpness of limbs depend upon individual achievement of the artist. The legs have their knees very carefully modelled and give an impression of elasticity and pliability even when they are erect and upright. The curly locks of hair are spread on both sides of the shoulder in a rounded and orderly manner, and the ornaments are simple and heavy. Scarves flutter on both sides but in a rigid and regular manner in separate and plastic masses. The accessory figures sometimes show flexions of attitudes, but they are always steady and balanced. The back slabs are comparatively free from decorative embellishments, and these are indicated more in scratches than in rounded volumes.

Tenth Century

Out of the soft fleshliness controlled within definite outlines the 10th century evolves a powerfully massive form of the body which is shaped with a disciplined vigour, and shows a conscious strength that seems to swell the outline from within (figs. 155, 157-164). In some instances this is controlled by a strict discipline even to the

extent of petrification of the flesh, but in most cases it is a soft and tender discipline and the vigour is spread out into the surface. This vigour transformed the softness of the fleshly form into mighty majestic roundness. Almost all specimens are moulded into high relief and the trunk and limbs are all pregnant with the subdued vigour of a mighty form. Throughout the century Pāla art retains this quality. This is most evident in the stone figures, for example, in the images of Ṛishabhanātha from Surohar, Dinajpur (Pl. XIX, 47), the Buddha from Ujāni, Faridpur (Pl. LXVIII, 164) and Varāha-Avatāra from Silimpur, Bogra (Pl. LXVII, 162). Even in feminine deities the ideal of physical form expressing a peculiar strength is equally noticeable, though at times it is subdued by the sensuous flexion of their body. The modelling still retains its sensuousness, though expressed within a disciplined form.

In other respects the 10th century retains, to a large extent, the quality of the 9th. The facial type is the same, equally full, but sometimes a bit longish. The flexions of the body are slightly on the increase, so that we have increasing curves in the outlines of figures; the *lalitāsana* or *ardhaparyaṅkāsana* pose is spread out in the surface, making itself wider and giving increasing opportunities for more slim curves; but legs tend to grow stiffer, gradually losing elasticity. The shape of the stelae remains more or less unchanged and the decorations of the background sparse. The borders of the stelae, however, tend to become more elaborate and fully modelled, worked out in bead and flame designs, and further decorated by lotus or some other decorative designs at the top. Details of jewellery also are more elaborately worked out, and the delicately chiselled and fluttering scarves begin to show their folds as well as their wavy undulations. The treatment of the *paridhāna* (drapery) remains the same as in the preceding century, with the ends plain or straight, frizzled or with large undulations, according to the individual taste of the artist or craftsman.

Eleventh Century

The end of the 10th and beginning of 11th century transform the vigour and strength of bodily form into one of gracefulness and elegant mannerism, while a slender bodily type comes to be favoured (figs. 165-176). This is already evident in the Vishṇu stela from Bāghāura (Tippera) inscribed in the third year of Mahīpāla I (Pl. LXIX, 168). This particular image may be taken as stylistic index of specimens for the next three or four generations. The deep broad outlook of the 10th century becomes somewhat thin

and circumscribed, and the elegance of the slender bodily type gradually becomes more evident. The legs have stiffened to a great extent and given up all elasticity, even in postures that suggest movement; the knees are still modelled but not so perfectly as in the 9th century specimens; they tend to be indicated by an incised curved line. The upper trunk, with its liveliness of graduated modelling and a face with a blissful happy expression, is, however, in striking contrast with the lower part of the body. Accessories, namely the attendant divinities, the architectonic decorations, the flying *gandharvas,* the motives on the slab, and the ornaments decorating the main and accompanying figures become more independent, and they have all an equal share in the general effect of the stelae. They introduce a sort of liveliness which is still kept in balance, but is already on its way to overwhelm the main figure by their sumptuousness. The emphasis on the decorative aspect is clear, which, with the progress of time, gradually tends to be almost playful, and later on, voluptuous in its formal treatment and appearance. Curls of hair and fluttering scarves are on their way to increase, and deep perpendicular and oblique cuts introduce a full display of light and shade. Independence of ornaments, the flexions of the accompanying figures and playfulness of the rich decorations keep on increasing round iconographic conventions. The bodily form becomes stereotyped, but the elegance of the modelling is retained throughout the century; the facial type is fully expressive of sensitiveness, and, whatever its shape, is enlivened by a downward stroke of the chin, full round lips and heavily-laden eyes. The garments are set as within ridges against the modelling of the body, and in some specimens the hem of the robe is modelled with tenderness and with wavy curves. In some specimens one also notices eye-brows that have double curves, bending once more towards their outer ends; this accentuates the sensitiveness of the eyes which in the images of the next century becomes more and more effective. The stela is either rounded or pointed at the top, but already its division into three or four architectonic parts becomes clear. The pedestal forms a definite unit; the main figure rises up from the pedestal in one plastic mass; but the back slab with its accompanying figures and accessory decorations is treated in separate masses controlled within different architectonic units. The compositional scheme is thus well-determined, and within this scheme there is an ever-growing attempt at introducing liveliness with the help of flexions of the body, decorations of ornaments which gradually dissolve into single items very delicately chiselled, and elaborate display of light and shade with the help of deep cuts, either oblique or perpendicular or both.

Twelfth Century

The stylistic index of the 12th century is supplied by two images, one of Sadāśiva from Rājibpur (Pl. LXXV, 178) inscribed in the reign of Gopāla III (*supra*, p. 167 f.n. 4) and another of Chaṇḍī from Dalbazar, Dacca, inscribed in the third year of Lakshmaṇasena (Pl. LXXVII, 180). The slender bodily type and the formal treatment of the preceding century are retained, but the modelling becomes a bit more petrified (Pl. LXXIV, 177). The sensitiveness of the facial expression disappears and is replaced by a serious heaviness; the modelled eye-brows seem to exist without any significance, merely for decoration; the legs have become almost column-like without any elasticity, and are decorated by an incised round line to indicate the knee. The relief in three or four architectonic units is covered by dense and heavy multitudes of accompanying figures and decorative details which grow more and more sumptuous and elaborate, and ultimately cover the compositional scheme altogether. Not only the modelling but also the volume becomes petrified and gradually loses its plastic significance. Ornaments are inordinately lavish and sumptuous, and do not seem to be connected organically with the figures. The accessories and ornaments, independent by themselves, are exaggerated to the utmost. They lose their significance and degenerate into decorations. The flexions of the body become extended to their utmost limit; bends to their last possibilities are employed; but the expression of movement is only that of pattern without any suggestiveness. The garments are bordered by small waves and the ends of the drapery are arranged in rounded zig-zags; not unoften the hem of the *uttarīya* is bordered with a narrow flounce. Scarves flutter in wavy undulations so as to accentuate the playful movements which are in consonance with the spirit of the entire stela. This display of spontaneously playful movement is evident in the postures of some of the minor figures, as for example, the *gandharvas* and some of the attendant divinities, as well as in the increasing linear movements of the drapery and frivolous exuberance of jewellery, garments and fashion of wearing the hair. This is equally evident in the clumsy and crowded scrolls treated in deep contrast of light and shade. But in spite of over-exaggeration of movements of accompanying figures and decorative accessories, there is a stiffening of the facial and physiognomical features. The plastic volume grows, as we have said, more and more petrified. The facial features, in spite of voluptuous and full curly lips and doubly-curved eye-brows and smiling expression, become pointed, almost to a triangle, and rigid, without any deep spiritual significance. The blissfully happy and glowing expression of meditation that had

been attained in the preceding centuries is now laden with a moist expression of heavy enjoyment of deep pleasure of a past moment (cf. the Chaṇḍī Image of the 3rd year of Lakshmaṇasena). One, however, notices here and there signs of a new artistic inspiration, of new creativeness amid a degenerate system that was already on its way to suffocation by worldly exuberance. A spontaneous power of modelling in a completely round form inspires a tough and vigorous artistic form in some rare specimens, and in spite of sumptuousness of ornaments and a precise outline it reveals a conscious dignity and strength, a freshness of elementary experience that could yet save the art from final stagnation (Pl. LXXVI, 179). But that was not to be. Left to itself, the art could perhaps yet find out new channels or new experiences, but all chances were set at rest by the rapid rush of Islam.

XI. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

The art of 12th century represents mainly that of the Senas, and a cross-section of the literature and culture patronised at the Sena court reveals the attitude of wordly exuberance that one notices in Sena sculptures. Even religious themes—both in art and literature—are endowed with a wordly consciousness and almost physical charm and grace (figs. 177-181). The poem of Jayadeva, for example, may be regarded as a literary counter-part of the voluptuous sensuousness of the Sena art. In its origin it had no doubt a religious inspiration, but there is also no doubt that what was basically a spiritual experience came to be overshadowed by a worldly trend developed in the Sena court. Sensuousness and grace were properties of earlier periods of Bengali art as well, but it was left to the Senas to allow them to degenerate into mere worldly lavishness.

It is not impossible that the explanation for this worldly lavishness of Sena sculptures is to be found in the strain of their foreign blood. Contemporary South Indian sculpture is equally lavish in its worldliness, though lacking in the grace, sensuousness, and animation of Sena images which were direct legacies from earlier Pāla sculptures.

The four centuries of Pāla and Sena rule have bequeathed to us a very large number of images now sheltered in the different museums of the province, or scattered in villages, temples, tree-shades, markets and private houses. Every year stray explorations, diggings of tanks or at mounds, are incessantly yielding new specimens. It remains to be seen whether all of them would fit in with the process of evolution just outlined. For reasons stated above this outline has necessarily to be tentative and can only be roughly sketched.

One stage gradually merges into another, sometimes anticipating the next, sometimes continuing the past through the next. No clear-cut demarcation between different stages is, therefore, possible. Besides, living art is not susceptible to dead uniformity, and we must always expect exceptions to the general process; for example, we find different types of facial features as also of compositional arrangements during the same period, and even in the short space of a single reign (cf. Pl. LXX, 169, 171). As to facial features it is certain that there are stamps of various ethnical elements that composed the people of contemporary Bengal. In some specimens there is a marked Mongoloid element which must have been due to ethnic infiltrations through the north-east. The Senas themselves were a foreign element and how much they contributed to the facial type is yet to be determined. Local variations and trends are an important factor to be taken into account, and individual craftsmanship must have played its part; and finally the indigenous art of the people also probably existed side by side, only worked out in poorer materials. It is only too likely that unconsciously the art of the court, the cult, and prosperous lay communities came into contact with the art of the people, and was influenced by it, but on the whole it guarded itself by a carefully followed hieratic tradition. This is exemplified by a stone image of Pārvatī, dated in 1579 Śaka Era, now in the VRS. Museum (Pl. LXXVII, 182) which still retains in general the Pāla and Sena idiom of art, though in a very wooden and schematic fashion.

The art-form during these four long centuries proceeds in a wavering line; sometimes favouring a fleshly form frankly sensuous, sometimes an abstract form equally sensuous, not frankly but suggestively, both tendencies working within the strict rigours of canonical tradition. The art seems to have derived its charm and peculiar character from an oscillation between the reality of the flesh and the reality of abstraction, perhaps between two minds, one deeply imbued with the *sādhanā* of the Tantra that knows this physical body to be abode of heavenly bliss, and the other aspiring to abstract the godliness in man out of his material body itself,—the ideal (*sādhanā*) of Brahmanical Hinduism. In striking contrast to this ideological oscillation between two tendencies, is the gradual evolution of the composition. It begins with quiet simple flexions and attitudes of the body and simple decorations and ornamentations; but with the progress of time the flexions and attitudes of the body become excited and agitated, decorations and ornamentations, playful and frivolous. This tendency from simple and quiet to agitated and frivolous general appearance, proceeds in a steady straight course. In any case this tendency seems to have worked

itself to such exaggerations that it came to sit heavily on the art itself, and when finally Islam came and with it came also a change in the Court, and for a time in the socio-religious institutions and establishments, the art was suffocated, if not to immediate death. at least to immediate stagnation.

The paucity of art-specimens datable in the 13th and the two following centuries, compared with those of the preceding three hundred years, reveals in a striking manner almost a complete break with the tradition of the past, such as we can only dimly perceive also in the other spheres of culture and civilisation of Bengal. It indicates the organic relation between political condition and development of culture on the one hand, and the exhaustion of an art-tradition from inside, on the other. The domination of an alien race seems to have hastened the stagnation of Hindu art in Bengal, at least for the time being.

This sudden end is to be regretted all the more, as Bengal permanently enriched, and made a notable contribution to, the art-tradition of India, specially at a time when it was gradually losing its vitality in many regions. Even the few specimens that have survived the ravages of man and nature to tell the tale of the evolution of sculpture in Bengal leave no doubt about its high qualities and inherent possibilities. Judged by any standard, it easily holds a high position in Medieval India. Apart from its special characteristics and technical excellence described above, the sculptures of Bengal often display a high aesthetic quality which must ever remain the ultimate basis of the proper valuation of art. A detailed discussion of this topic is beyond the scope of the present chapter. Nevertheless attention may be drawn to a few specimens selected at random from the accompanying illustrations which would give a fair idea of the aesthetic merits of the Bengal sculptures (*e.g.* Figs. 21, 24, 26, 32, 111, 112, 114, 115, 122, 144, 151, 152, 154, 160, 163, 173, 175, 181). These are not necessarily the very best—and, of course, opinions would differ greatly on their relative aesthetic merits as compared with others—but they are cited merely as illustrative of the high qualities that distinguish the plastic art of Bengal and ensure it a high place in any classification of the medieval art of India.

III. PAINTING

Specimens of painting datable earlier than the Pāla period have not hitherto been traced anywhere in Bengal. But a casual remark in Fa-hien's account[1] indicates that painting as a creative art was known and practised in the country as early as the fourth century A.D. According to the Śilpa-śāstra texts of later times it is almost a canonical injunction to decorate temple-walls with paintings. There is thus every reason to assume that temples and other religious establishments had their walls decorated with mural or fresco paintings in Bengal as elsewhere in India. But these are all irrevocably lost.

Extant specimens of early paintings in Eastern India are illuminations on palm-leaves of manuscripts, ranging from approximately the beginning of the 11th century A.D. to the end of the 12th. All of them refer to the Pāla culture-period, and among the more important ones, so far known, may be enumerated the following :—

1-2. Two *Ashṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* MSS. dated in the 5th and the 6th year respectively of Mahīpāla (Cambridge, Add. 1464[2] and Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal No. 4713),[3] which are probably the earliest.

3. *Ashṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* MS. dated in the 39th year of Rāmapāla, formerly of the Vredenburg Collection.[4]

4-5. Two *Ashṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* MSS. belonging to the Varendra Research Society, Rajshahi, one dated in the 19th year of king Harivarman (*supra* pp. 200 ff.), and another belonging to about the 12th century.[5]

6. The *Ashṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* MS. of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal (A. 15) dated in N.E. 191, *i.e.* 1071 A.D.[6]

[1] Fa-hien stayed two years at Tāmralipti, "writing out his Sūtras, and drawing pictures of images" (*Fa-hien.* 100).

[2] Foucher-*Icon.* 31, Pl. x, figs. 1, 3-5; Bendall, *Cambridge Cat.* 101.

[3] *Proc. ASB.* 1899, p. 69.

[4] Vredenburg, "Continuity of Pictorial Tradition in India." (*Rūpam*, 1920, No. 1, figs. 1-11, pp. 7-11).

[5] Unpublished.

[6] Best half-tone and coloured representations of these illuminations can be seen in *JISOA.* III, No. I, Pls. IX, X and XI. Cf. also Foucher-*Icon.* 27 ff.

7-8. Two MSS., one of the *Kāraṇḍavyūha,* and the other of the *Bodhicharyāvatāra,* both belonging to about the 12th century (Varendra Research Society, Rajshahi)[1]

9. The MS. No. 20589 of the Boston Museum, dated in the 4th year of Gopāla (III. ?).[2]

10. The Sawamura MS.[3]

11. The British Museum MS. of *Ashṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* dated in the 15th year of Gopāla (OR. 6902).[4]

12-13. The *Pañcharakshā* MS. of the 14th year of Nayapāla,[5] and another MS. (Add. No. 1643),[6] dated 1015 A.D., both now preserved in the library of the Cambridge University.

14. The *Ashṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* MS., A. S. B. No. 4203, dated N.E. 268 *i.e.* 1148 A.D.[7]

15. The MS. of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal No. 9789 A, dated the 18th year after Govindapāla[8] (*c.* 1180 A.D., *supra* p. 171 f.n. 1), which is perhaps the latest in date.

16. A MS., for some time in the possession of Mr. Ajit Ghosh of Calcutta.[9]

It will be seen that such illuminated manuscripts are few in number, and in point of time they occupy only two centuries, but it is possible to draw inferences from the large number of stone and metal images prior to and contemporaneous with these miniatures. Besides these minatures, we have at our disposal three engraved drawings on copper-plates that may be said to belong to about the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries respectively, detailing Brahmanical subjects.

Iconographically, almost all these paintings belong to the Vajrayāna-Tantrayāna pantheon (*supra* p. 467), and represent, accord-

[1] Unpublished.

[2] Coomaraswamy, *Portfolio of Indian Art.* Pls. XXXII-XXXV.

[3] *OZ.* 1926, Pls. IX-X.

[4] *JRAS.* 1910. pp. 150-51.

[5] *PB. Pl.* XXXVII, fig. 3; also Sastri-*Cat.* I. 6.

[6] Bhatt.-*Cat.* Pl. I. figs. *a-d*; also Foucher-*Icon,* Vol. I. pp. 16-17.

[7] A reproduction of one of the illuminations of this may be seen in *JISOA.* I. Pl. XXXVII, fig. 2.

[8] *PB.* Pl. XXXVII, fig. 2.

[9] Ghosh, "Miniatures of a newly-discovered Buddhist Palm-leaf Manuscript from Bengal" (*Rūpam,* 1929, p. 78). It is understood that the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal have in their possession another illuminated manuscript of the *Ashṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā,* not yet brought to light or even largely known to the scholarly world.

ing to prescribed *sādhanas,* gods and goddesses of the cults such as Tārā, Lokanātha, Chuṇḍā, Mahākāla, Amitābha, Avalokita, Maitreya, Vajrapāṇi, Ākāśagarbha *etc.* with their attendant divinities. Some of these miniatures are iconographically very important, inasmuch as they help to identify gods and goddesses of the Vajrayāna-Tantrayāna pantheon mentioned in their respective *sādhanas,* but not met with in contemporary plastic art. More often than not, these illuminations represent the full *maṇḍala* of the main divinities for which there is obviously the space and scope available in painting, but not in plastic art. A few miniatures depict stories from the Jātakas or from the life of the Buddha as well. They were executed under the patronage and direction of the members of the ruling, the priestly and prosperous lay classes of the existing social order. The sociological background of this art was therefore the same as that of contemporary sculptural and monumental art.

It will be readily seen that geographically these manuscripts were not all written within the modern language area of the Bengali-speaking people; some of them come from Bihar and some from Nepal. But as there is hardly any appreciable stylistical difference in the pictures due to geographical limitations during the period under review, they can conveniently be studied as belonging to one and the same group, specially when we find that definitely known Bengal productions (*e.g.* the one written in the 19th year of Harivarman) have the same artistic character as those produced in Bihar, and also resemble to a great extent those produced in Nepal.

It must be pointed out at the very outset that these miniatures do not represent a separate style of book-illustration; they are in fact mural paintings in reduced dimension, and can in no way be compared with a truly characteristic phase of book-illustration which constitutes a fascinating chapter in the history of art in Persia, China, mediaeval West or in mediaeval India. This is evident from the fact that the miniatures mostly represent gods and goddesses belonging to different temples and monastic establishments of the period and are not illustrative of the subject-matter of the MSS. in which they find place. In fact, they have hardly any relation whatsoever with the subject of the texts they embellish.

The colours used in these paintings are orpiment yellow, white, indigo-blue, Indian ink-black, cinnabar red, and green. The last appears to be a mixture of orpiment and indigo, unlike the green of Ajaṇṭā. All these are used in different shades. But on the whole, the general colour arrangement of the divinities is mostly determined by iconographical requirements. Neither Indian red or any ochres, nor ultramarine is used. Tonality of colours is practically unknown. The outline is either drawn in black or in red, and as usual in Indian

painting, seems to have been sketched out first, and later on filled in with colour.

Usually, the composition of these illuminations follows some well-known schematic principles of balance. In most of them, the main divinity, always of larger size, stands or is seated in the centre against the background either of an architectural design or of an elongated or semi-round aureole, or inside a terraced temple-representation, flanked evenly on two sides by lesser divinities of the *maṇḍala*, in single or double, straight or circular, rows as their number may require. When the main divinity occupies one side, the lesser ones of the *maṇḍala* occupy another. The law of perspective is the same as in contemporary plastic art; it is invariably linear. The 'horror vacui' is equally noticed and the vacant space is filled by flying divinities, vegetal or ornamental decorations, architectural motifs or similar other devices. The whole painted surface is framed on two sides by upright panels.

With the help of the dated manuscripts it is possible to arrange these miniature paintings in a chronological sequence, but it hardly shows any appreciable stylistic evolution; in fact, the trend and tendencies, so far as painting is concerned, seem to have remained fixed, more or less, during the two centuries referred to above.

These miniature paintings reveal an already developed form and technique so that they must not be considered as isolated examples; rather their form indicates that they were intimately linked with an art practice and tradition that must have existed in the form of large wall-paintings or manuscript-illuminations that carried the earlier tradition of Ajaṇṭā and Ellora in an uninterrupted sequence. This will be clearer from an analysis of the paintings themselves.

Consider, for instance, two miniatures from the two earliest dated MSS. of the 5th and the 6th year of Mahīpāla mentioned above. The illumination representing the story of the birth of the Buddha in the A. S. B. MS. No. 4713,[1] shows clearly that the artist depends for his effect as much on the modelling in colour as on the modelling capacity of the line, sinuous and flowing,—lines increasing and decreasing in thickness in accordance with the degree of the surging roundness of the contour that they accompany or outline. Look at the left arm of Māyādevī's sister, or at the lower abdomen of both Māyādevī and her sister, where both these qualities are equally in evidence. Modelling in colour is also particularly noticeable in the

[1] Pl. LXXVIII, fig. 184. An enlarged reproduction is given in *JISOA*. I. Pl. XXXVII, fig. 1, with discussion of its artistic qualities by Dr. Stella Kramrisch.

use of high lights distributed in a summary manner in those places of the body and face which are meant to come forth to higher planes. These high lights, as is usual in Indian painting, are achieved by laying on white in various shades. The treatment is no doubt rigid, but subtler transition in the modelling is not unknown; this is clearly noticeable in the treatment of the face and torso of Māyādevī. But compare the treatment of the face of Māyādevī with that of the face of her sister; the subtler transitions are absent in the latter case, the plastically modelled treatment is practically on the stagnating point, and the facial features are completely linearised.

The Cambridge MS. Add. 1464 is older by one year. In the A. S. B. MS. illumination (dated in the 6th year of Mahīpāla), as noted above, the plastic quality is potent in the modelling capacity of the line as well as in the colour-modelling; but in the slightly earlier illuminations of this MS. the colour modelling is faint and stereotyped; whatever amount of modelling in colour is in evidence is distributed in an otherwise flat and tight surface. Whatever remains of it is held tightly by the skin in firm grip; the attitudes of the figures are pale-like erect whatever their actual postures or positions; an impression of flexibility is, however, imparted into them by their linear inflexions. This faint and stereotyped colour-modelling, however, leaves the modelling capacity of the line almost untouched; indeed it is still valid and always in flowing curves along with the broad expanse of almost a flat and thinned surface.

In the Boston and Sawamura MSS., in some of the miniatures of the MS. formerly in the Vredenburg collection, in some again of the MS. for some time in the possession of Mr. Ajit Ghosh of Calcutta, as well as in the majority of the illuminations of the MSS. in the collection of the Varendra Research Society, Rajshahi, one can see a similar treatment in its fullest expression. For instance, in a majority of the illuminations of the Vredenburg MS. the colour modelling is faint so that the surface controlled within the lines has thinned to a considerable extent, but the lines themselves not only sway in elegance and sensitiveness but are also perfect in execution. The main outline or the torso of the main figure in three-quarter profile is bent in a concave curve. The linear inflexions of the outlines as well as of the garlands and *upavītas* have a stereotyped setting, and have hardly any meaning against the background of a thinned surface; they are nevertheless of the same degree of elegance and refinement as some of the contemporary Pāla sculptures.

But consider again a miniature from the same Vredenburg manuscript representing the Green Tārā accompanied by two attendant goddesses, one of which coloured yellow may be Aśoka-kāntā,

Here, however, the plastically modelled treatment with the help of colour shows itself on its way to thinning, but is still quite in evidence. This can be best seen in the torsos of all the three figures. The modelling quality of the sinuous and flowing line retains its full vitality. It is thus evident that both the treatments, namely, the plastically modelled treatment and the modelled treatment of the flowing and sinuous line appear side by side in the same manuscript. In fact, both treatments are synchronous and both can be seen side by side in, for example, the miniatures of the Vredenburg MS. which may be regarded as the finest specimens of Bengali painting so far known to us (cf. Frontispiece).

The illuminations in the A. S. B. MS. No. A. 15 are of a higher standard. The modelling quality of colour is flat and thin, but whatever there is, is distributed intelligently all over the surface in graceful modulations. Occasionally, there are also touches of high lights,[1] specially in the transitions of the face. But the line fully retains its flowing largeness and tough flux (Pls. LXXIX, LXXX.)

But even this line, which is the main pivot of these paintings, is weak, brisk and faltering in some of the miniatures. Cambridge MS. Add. 1643 is dated early in the eleventh century. Consider the lines of the illuminations of this MS. and see how weak and faltering they are; they appear to be broken and clipped and have lost their flowing and uninterrupted flux; in some examples they are even sharp and somewhat hectic. Also, whatever modelling in colour is evident, is dessiccated and disintegrated. But in the same MS. again, there are some illuminations, *e.g.* the one with the label "*Samataṭe Jayatunga Lokanātha,*" where the line is not so short-featured and crisp; it has a continuous flux no doubt, but is unrefined by any grace or sentiment. Modelling in colour is faint and is responsible for the thin surface of the contour that is characterised by an upward stiffening, even where the figures are seated or standing in graceful *tribhaṅga*, a posture so fondly and widely cherished in Pāla and Sena plastic art.

The same tendency is more clearly noticeable in, for example, the illumination representing the Buddha discoursing to Maitreya and Subhūti in the A. S. B. MS. No. 4203, dated N.E. 268 *i.e.* 1148 A.D. Though affiliated to the East Indian tradition, the illuminations of these seem to have a distinctly Nepalese flavour and idiom which can be seen in the absence of any trace of modelling in the coloured surface, in the upward stiffening of the pale-like erect bodies, and

[1] See, *e.g.*, the face of Mahāśri Tārā in Pl. LXXX, 190.

in the curt and broken and almost stagnant quality of the line. Compositionally, too, the miniatures are divided into single and separate units which are not inherently related to one whole by one single rhythm.

A. S. B. MS. No. 9789 A, dated in the 18th year after Govindapāpa's reign, is perhaps the latest in date of Pāla miniatures which are hitherto known. Stylistically speaking, the illuminations of this MS. are but painted equivalents of contemporary plastic art of Bengal which is altogether given to modelled mass, in varying degree, and the flowing curve. These miniatures are also distinguished by their plastically modelled treatment in line and colour, but the modelling in colour is somewhat rigid and almost on the verge of stagnation, and, though belonging to a later date, are thus more closely related to the earlier miniatures of the Vredenburg MS. or the A. S. B. MS. No. A 15, *etc.*

Several conclusions follow from the analysis made above. It is now evdient that East Indian paintings, with the tendencies noticed above are, stylistically speaking, painted equivalents of contemporary plastic art of the Pālas and Senas, both in outer form and inner quality. In the plastically modelled treatment in colour as well as of the linear inflexions, there are indeed, as we have seen above, variations in degree and quality, but in most cases this is perhaps the outcome of the time factor or of the individual quality of the artist. As in sculptures and bronzes of the period, so in this class of paintings as well, one easily notices the modelled mass controlled within definite but sinuous lines, and the flowing curve in the contour of the body and the lower abdomen as well as in the sensitive lines of the fingers. So far as the modelled mass goes what the sculptor achieves by gradations in the three dimensions at his disposal the painter does with his colours. A careful analysis of the facial features or poses and attitudes of the different parts of the body, as well as of the ornaments of the examples referred to above, would at once establish the family likeness of these paintings with the plastic art of the period.

It is equally evident that these miniatures are basically and fundamentally related to and derived from the Indian pictorial traditions so well-known in Ajaṇṭā and Ellora. These traditions belong to two types—"classical" and "mediaeval." The implications of both the terms have been fully brought out by Dr. Stella Kramrisch[1] and are now almost universally accepted. The purest Ajaṇṭā type has been labelled "classically Indian" and the other

[1] Kramrisch, in *JISOA*. I. No. 2, p. 182, where other references are given.

type noticeable in Ajaṇṭā, Ellorā and also in Eastern India "mediaevally Indian." The classical type is of a thoroughly plastic conception whereas the mediaeval is linear. Both the types, as we have seen above, appear simultaneously and side by side, but sometimes they are also fused together as in some of the Ellorā paintings as well as in a good number of East Indian illuminations. "One of the results of this fusion is the concave curve as outline of the body, arrested and full of tension, as well as the zigzag pattern of such poses which originally have been swaying in ample curves in an uninterrupted flux."[1]

The beginning of the linear conception can be traced back no doubt to Ellorā paintings; but it is perhaps in Western India that this conception found its widest expression, though in a few 12th and 13th century examples of drawings on copper-plates found in localities ranging from the Sunderbans to Chittagong, we have some of its earlier versions, even earlier than those in certain Pāla miniatures already noticed above. An illumination reproduced on Pl. XXXIII (right, topmost panel) of Coomaraswamy's *Portfolio of Indian Art*, illustrates very well the "mediaeval" type within Pāla painting. It now appears that this linear conception, wherever it might have originated, must have become an all-India property of art conception, more or less in a developed form, already by about the 11th or 12th century. Pāla and Sena sculpture, however, kept itself almost untouched by this tendency, but Pāla painting could not, painting being itself two-dimensional. Eastern India transferred this tendency to Nepal[2] and Burma.[3]

The fruition of this "mediaeval" tendency, that is of the linear conception, in Bengal, can best be seen in the drawings on copper-plates referred to above.[4] The Sunderban Plate (Pl. LXXVIII. 183) has a representation of Vishṇu and Garuḍa, while an unpublished engraving from Mehar (Chittagong) represents a pair of figures engaged in a deathly struggle. The former belongs to the closing years of the 12th century (*supra* p. 222) while the latter to the 13th (*supra* p. 253). In both these drawings the modelling quality of the line is fully valid: it is still flowing, alert and sweeping. It continues to retain its large sweep and undisturbed flux, though wherever

[1] *JISOA*. I. No. 2, p. 132.

[2] *Ibid.* pp. 129-47 and Plates.

[3] Cf. *JISOA*. VI. 137-44 and Plates.

[4] Three such engravings are known: (1) An eleventh century copper-plate with engravings of a bull and a tail-piece, referred to by Coomaraswamy in *OZ*. 1926, p. 3; (2) The engravings on the Sunderban Copper-plate of Dommanapāla (*supra* p. 222) discussed by D. P. Ghosh in *JISOA*. II, No. 2, pp. 127-29, and Plate; (3) The Mehar Copper-plate (*supra* p. 253), now in the Asutosh Museum.

there is the slightest pretext, it loves to indulge in brisk curves. It has moreover an exuberance, a vivacity that seems to be out of all proportion to the subject-matter, and is born of no inner knowledge or significance; and it is perhaps an outcome of this vivacity and exuberance that the lines of the face, when shown in profile or three quarters, form angles or sharp curves in a beak-like nose, or in an almost angular chin, and the bow-like curves of the brows or rims of the upper lips are extended as far as they would permit. The artist seems to have been carried away by his lines which are with him the only means of establishing his identity with his subject matter; this is especially marked in his delight in drawing brisk or extended curves. Even in the delineation of frontal positions the face becomes completely linearised, and where there is little scope for accentuation of sharpness, the curves are as brisk and as much repeated as possible. The Mehar engraving is of a higher artistic standard; the line is more powerful and shows modelling capacity; but the "mediaeval" tendency is potent in this as well.

It is easy to discover a superficial resemblance between this tradition of painting and that of Western India, mainly Gujarati, examples of which are abundant from the fourteenth century onwards. Both these traditions belong to the same tendency, to the same "mediaeval" conception, but there is yet a striking difference. The quality of the line in the two traditions differs to a very large extent. The line in "Western" tradition is flaming and pointed, angles are sharp almost to a geometrical point, and though there is the same predilection for brisk and extended curves, they are drawn almost without any emotion, and not unoften broken. They have hardly anything to compare with the sensitive, emotional and uninterrupted sweep of the line replete with a melodious lyricism as one sees in the examples cited above. The "Western" line has nothing but flat and hardened surfaces to control within its limits, but the Bengal line with its sensitiveness, tempered lyricism and short or extended curves as the case may be, shows off the roundness of the mass that is confined within its boundaries. Not only did this tradition impart itself to Nepal and Burma, but it continued with vigour in Bengal, Assam and Orissa up to comparatively late mediaeval times[1] side by side with the pure Ajaṇṭā tradition of the modelled treatment of the line which can be traced down to modern times in the *paṭas* from Kālīghāt, Calcutta. Here also Bengali painting is not an isolated chapter, but is rather a local version of the contemporary all-India tendency in painting.

[1] Some Bengal miniatures from the 15th century onwards show this mediaeval tendency in full swing.

CHAPTER XV

SOCIETY

I. Ethnological Background

It has been noted above[1] that deprecatory references in Vedic literature indicate that the primitive people in Bengal were different in race and culture from the Vedic Aryans. This conclusion is borne out by the evidence of language and anthropology, and reference has already been made (*supra* pp. 374-75) to the diverse racial and linguistic elements which can be traced in the composition of the Bengali people and language.

The history of the different races that settled in Bengal in primitive times belongs to the domain of anthropology, and cannot be treated here in details. But in order to understand properly the background of social conditions in Bengal, it is necessary to state briefly some of the important ethnological deductions made by the anthropologists in respect of the people of Bengal.

Broadly speaking, we can distinguish two elements in the people of Bengal: one consisting of the primitive tribes like the Kols, Śabaras, Pulindas, Hāḍi, Ḍom, Chaṇḍāla and others designated as the Mlechchhas; and the other consisting of the higher classes of people which come within the framework of the caste system (see *infra* pp. 567 ff.). The former groups are representatives of the earliest inhabitants of Bengal, and the majority, if not the whole, of them were probably descended from the non-Aryan people of the Ṛigvedic age, referred to as Nishādas in Vedic literature. The ethnic name Nishāda, proposed by the late Rai Bahadur Ramaprasad Chanda for this primitive non-Aryan people, is now generally accepted, though some would call them "Austro-Asiatic" or "Austric" according to the family to which their language belonged. These Nishādas, with a neolithic culture, formed the substratum of the population of Bengal, as of most other parts of India, but were submerged by new waves of people with a high culture and civilisation, so that ultimately they touched only the outer fringe of society, while the latter formed its very basis and foundation. The racial composition of this latter group is, therefore, a question of primary importance in any study of the social conditions of Bengal.

[1] *Supra* pp. 7-8; 35.

Although no reliable evidence is available in respect of ancient times, Professor P. C. Mahalanobis has thrown interesting light on this question by a detailed analysis of the anthropometric data regarding thirty modern typical castes of Northern India, including seven from Bengal, *viz.* Brāhmaṇa, Kāyastha, Sadgopa, Kaivarta, Rājbanśī, Pod and Bāgdi. Some of his general conclusions may be stated as follows[1] :—

1. The Bengal Brahmans resemble the other Bengal castes far more closely than they (the Brahmans) resemble castes outside Bengal, including the Brahmans.

2. There is a close association between resemblance with the Brahmans and social status of a caste in Bengal. In other words, the proposition "the higher the social status the greater is the resemblance with the Bengal Brahmans" is almost literally true.

3. The Kāyasthas, Sadgopas and Kaivartas are typical indigenous castes of Bengal.

4. The Kāyasthas show great resemblance with all the Bengal castes, particularly with the "middle castes" (Sadgopas, Kaivartas and Pods) of Bengal. There is very little difference between the Sadgopas and the Kāyasthas on the whole.

5. The Kaivartas show as much intermixture within Bengal as Kāyasthas and Sadgopas, but less affinity with upper castes and greater resemblance with lower castes.

6. The Bengal Brahmans stand out prominently as the only caste in Bengal which shows definite evidence of resemblance with the Punjab and also a substantial amount of resemblance with "upper castes" outside Bengal. They do not appear to have intermixed appreciably with eastern tribes and are practically free from racial contact with the aboriginal tribes of Chota Nagpur.

7. The Kāyasthas, the Sadgopas and the Kaivartas show the same amount of moderate resemblance with Bihar, but do not show any resemblance with the Punjab. Resemblance with the aboriginal tribes of Chota Nagpur is not appreciable. Indications of such intermixture increase as we go down the social scale, being very large, for example, in the cases of the Bāgdis and the Pods.

It is unfortunate that Professor Mahalanobis, in making the analysis of race-mixture in Bengal, could take into consideration only a limited number of castes. In view of this and the insufficiency of accurate anthropometric data available in this country, it would not perhaps be safe to admit, without reserve, the truth of all the general observations made by him. But if, subject to this caution, we provisionally accept them as working hypotheses, we

[1] *JASB.* N.S. XXIII. 301-33.

may draw some important inferences and find corroboration for others.[1]

The information concerning the Brāhmaṇas is of great interest. Their resemblance with upper castes outside Bengal is easily explained by the constant immigration of the latter into Bengal (*v. infra* p. 579), and their growing dislike of inter-marriage and inter-dining noted below (pp. 575-77). At the same time the fact that these Brahmans resemble the other castes of Bengal far more closely than they (the Brahmans) resemble the castes, including Brahmans, of other parts of India, proves that they were also mainly indigenous people of Bengal, were never isolated from the other eastes, and did not strictly observe the rules against inter-dining and intermarriage, which were evidently of slow growth and never fully operative in ancient times.

But by far the most interesting result of the analysis of Professor Mahalanobis is that it demonstrates the homogeneity of the upper castes of Bengal, who formed a distinct entity among the peoples of India. Their moderate resemblance with the Biharis is the inevitable consequence of close association between Bengal and Bihar due to political reasons and geographical contiguity. It may, therefore, be presumed from the result of the analysis, that the upper classes of Bengal formed a distinct racial unit, which underwent only very slight changes in historic times by contact with the aboriginal tribes surrounding them and the immigrants from Upper India. This is true also of the Brahmans, subject to what has been said above. For according to anthropometric tests the Brahmans of Bengal "are more closely related to their non-Brahman neighbours than to the Brahmans of Midland."[2]

We may thus postulate an ethnically distinct race in Bengal which formed the background of a social and political entity in historic times. As to the origin of this race, opinions as usual widely differ. Without entering into minute anthropological discussions, it will suffice to state here the more important views on this subject. Anthropologists generally agree that the Bengalis "originally came of an ethnic stock that was different from the stock from which the

[1] More anthropometric data regarding the Brāhmanas and other castes in Bengal have been collected since Prof. Mahalanobis wrote. They are, however, very meagre, and generally support his conclusions.

[2] R. P. Chanda, *Indo-Aryan Races*, p. 162. As noted above, the same view is maintained by Prof. Mahalanobis. It is also supported by Mr. H. C. Chakladar's analysis of the anthropometric data regarding the Brāhmaṇas and the Muchis of Bengal (Presidential Address, Anthropological Section, *PSC*. xxiii. 359-90), mentioned later.

Vedic Aryans originated." This view rests upon a comparative study of the shape of the skulls. For while "long heads" pre ponderate in all ranks of society in the provinces that now represent the ancient Vedic Aryandom, there is a preponderance of "medium and round heads" in Bengal.[1] Sir Herbert Risley, to whom belongs the credit for the first scientific investigation of the origin of the Indian peoples, traced the round-headed element among the Bengalis to Dravidian and Mongoloid admixture.[2] The late Rai Bahadur R. P. Chanda, who was the first to oppose Risley's theory of the Mongolo-Dravidian origin of the Bengalis, derived them from the *Homo Alpinus* type, a very brachy-cephalic population of Aryan or Indo-European speech living in the pre-historic period in the Pamirs and the Taklamakan desert. Mr. Chanda was of opinion that when immigrants of the *Homo Alpinus* type entered India, they found the middle portion of the Gangetic plain in possession of the Vedic Āryas, and therefore found their way to the lower Gangetic plain across the tableland of Central India.[3]

Risley's view that the Bengali was an alloy of the Mongolian and Dravidian races held the ground for a long time, but does not now find favour among the anthropologists who have pointed out serious defects in his classification of Indian races, methods of collecting data and deriving inferences from them.[4] But while Mr. Chanda's view about the non-Mongolic character of the Bengalis is now generally accepted, his theory that the brachy-cephalic (broad-headed) people of Bengal originated from the *Homo Alpinus*

[1] There is also difference of language among these two groups. Chanda, *op. cit.* 59; Chakladar, *op. cit.* 374.

[2] Risley, (i) *The People of India*; (ii) *The Tribes and Castes of Bengal.*

[3] Chanda, *op. cit.* 74-75. Hoernle first started the theory of two distinct Aryan immigrations, the Vedic Aryans inhabiting the Eastern Punjab, North Rājputāna and western part of U.P., while the second group formed a ring round them in Gujarāt, Central India, South Bihar, Bengal *etc.* (for a detailed exposition of the theory of two distinct waves of Aryan immigration into India, on which Chanda's theory is based, cf. *ibid.* 37 ff.) But according to Hoernle's theory, adopted by Grierson, Giuffrida-Ruggeri, Dixon, Hutton and others, the Indo-Aryans of the Outer countries came earlier, and the inhabitants of the Midland represent the latest wave of immigration. Mr. Chakladar not only endorses this view but maintains further that the Outer group of Aryans, who came first, originated the early Vedic culture represented in the *Saṁhitās*. Later, he says, the long-headed branch of the Indo-Europeans drove the more cultured round-heads towards the south and east, and gradually absorbed the Vedic culture of the earlier settlers. They wrote the Brāhmaṇa texts, and subsequent Vedic culture developed and flourished in their hands (*op. cit.* 375).

[4] B. S. Guha, *Report on the Census of India*, 1931, Vol. I, Part III. pp. xxxix, lxiii; Porter, *ibid.* Vol. V, Part I, pp. 432 ff.; Chakladar, *op. cit.* 362.

type is not accepted by all. Dr. B. S. Guha, one of the latest writers on the subject, has criticised it and put forward a new theory of his own. Referring to the views of Mr. Chanda, Dr. Guha observes :

"The presence of broad-headed skulls in the early strata of Mohenjo-daro and Harappa would seem however to militate against this supposition. Recent discoveries... ....have definitely shown the existence of brachy-cephalic types in South Arabia, of which the "Omani" displayed Armenoid affinities which according to Keith must have come from Persia and Baluchistan. There seems no reason to think that the Indian Brachy-cephals with definite Armenoid affinities resembling the "Omani" had a different origin. That it was not Mongoloid would seem to be quite clear from both the character of the Indus Valley skulls and the values of the C. R. L.'s (Coefficient of Racial Likeness) discussed before."[1]

Mr. H. C. Chakladar personally measured a large number of Rāḍhīya Brāhmaṇas of Calcutta and Muchis of Birbhum. From an analysis of the anthropometric data thus collected by him he finds that beside the Alpine element which is strong in both, and more so in the Brahmin than in the Muchi, the Mediterranean element is present in both, but more prominent in the Muchi than in the Brahmin. From this he infers the existence of a predominant Alpine type and of an appreciable Mediterranean or Brown Race type among the Bengalis.[2]

The scope of the present work does not allow us to pursue the subject any further. Nor is it necessary to do so. For the sole foundation of these bold and far-reaching conclusions is the anthropomorphic test the scientific basis of which has not yet been generally conceded.[3] We must, therefore, admit that we cannot yet satis-

[1] B. S. Guha. *op. cit.* pp. lxx-lxxi.

[2] Chakladar, *op. cit.* pp. 367-68. The Alpine and the Mediterranean are two racial components of what was formerly called Dravidian, the use of which as an ethnic name is now generally discarded by anthropologists. The two earlier racial elements of the so-called Dravidians are named Veddaic and Muṇḍā, and the presence of both in Bengal is admitted by Chakladar (*op. cit.* 365).

[3] Eminent authorities have expressed the view that 'physical type depends far more on environment than on race', and that 'neither cephalic nor nasal index is of much use in determining race'. Further difficulty is caused by the fact "that physical anthropologists cannot agree upon any principles of skull measurement" (cf. Chanda, *op. cit.* 62-63). As an example of this difficulty, we may mention that while Porter (*op. cit.* p. 459) and Chanda (*op. cit.* 163) find wide divergence between the Brāhmaṇas of Bengal and Mithilā, Chakladar (*op. cit.* 368) finds considerable affinity between them, though all of them base their conclusions on anthropometric data. It must further be pointed out that the amount of anthropometric work that has been done in Bengal is disappointing both in extent and scientific value. Besides, in Bengal at any rate, considerable allowance must be made for differences caused by local factors the nature of which is yet unknown. This clearly follows from the observations made by Mr. Chakladar. He points

factorily solve the problem of the origin of the Bengalis. But there has been a rude shock to our complacent belief, held without question for a long time, that the Brahmans and other high castes of Bengal were descended from the Aryan invaders who imposed their culture and political rule upon primitive barbarian tribes.[1]

We know very little of the degree and the nature of the civilisation possessed by the pre-Aryan population of Bengal, and much less of the contribution of each of the racial elements to the common stock of the civilisation developed on the soil of Bengal. But in this respect we may postulate for Bengal what has generally been accepted for the rest of India. It is now generally held that the foundations of civilisation of India—its village life based on agriculture—were laid by the Nishādas or Austric-speaking peoples, and the same was also probably true of Bengal.

The available information regarding the culture of these peoples is thus summed up by Dr. S. K. Chatterji :

"The Austric tribes of India appear to have belonged to more than one group of the Austro-Asiatic section—to the Kol, to the Khasi, and to the Mon-Khmer groups. They were in the neolithic stage of culture and perhaps in India they learned the use of copper and iron. They brought with them a primitive system of agriculture in which a digging stick (*lag, lang, *ling*—various forms of an old word **lak*) was employed to till the hill-side. Terrace cultivation of rice on hills and plains cultivation of the same grain were in all likelihood introduced by them. They brought, as the names from their language would suggest, the cultivation of the coconut (*nārikela*), the plantain (*kadala*), the betel vine (*tāmbula*), the betel-nut (*guvāka*), probably also turmeric (*haridrā*) and ginger (*śriṅgavera*), and some vegetables like the brinjal (*vātiṅgana*) and the pumpkin (*alābu*). They appear not to have been cattle-breeders—they had no use for milk, but they were probably the first people to tame the elephant, and to domesticate the fowl. The habit of counting by twenties in some parts of North India (cf. Hindi *koḍī*, Bengali *kuḍi*, 'score, twenty,' from the Austric) appears to be the relic of an Austro-Asiatic habit. The later Hindu practice of computing time by days of the moon (*tithis*) seems also to be Austric in origin."[2]

The Alpine race which succeeded the Nishādas and forms the main element in the composition of the present Bengalis, other than the tribes mentioned above, possessed a higher degree of civilisation.

out that the Rāḍhīya Brāhmaṇas of the Birbhum district were not quite like those of East Bengal and Calcutta, and that the difference between the Brahmans and Muchis of Birbhum itself would not be so striking as the difference discovered between the Rāḍhīya Brāhmaṇas of Calcutta and the Muchis of Birbhum. He further mentions that the cephalic indices obtained from a measurement of the head of over ten thousand college students in Calcutta showed a great range of variation inside the same caste unit in different districts (*op. cit.* 377).

[1] S. K. Chatterji, *Indo-Aryan and Hindi*, pp. 30 ff.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 35; for further references cf. *ibid.* pp. 251-52.

Without being dogmatic in a matter for the investigation of which sufficient reliable data are not available, we may regard the following as a fairly reasonable statement of the nature and degree of civilisation possessed by the Bengalis before they came into contact with the Vedic Aryans.

"The ideas of *karma* and transmigration, the practice of *yoga*, the religious and philosophical ideas centring round the conception of the divinity as Śiva and Devī and as Vishṇu, the Hindu ritual of *pūjā* as opposed to the Vedic ritual of *homa*,—all these and much more in Hindu religion and thought would appear to be non-Aryan in origin; a great deal of Purāṇic and epic myth, legend and semi-history is pre-Aryan; much of our material culture and social and other usages, *e.g.* the cultivation of some of our most important plants like rice and some vegetables and fruits like the tamarind and the coconut, *etc.*, the use of the betel-leaf in Hindu life and Hindu ritual, most of our popular religion, most of our folk crafts, our nautical crafts, our distinctive Hindu dress (the *dhotī* and the *sāḍī*), our marriage ritual in some parts of India with the use of the vermilion and turmeric—and many other things—would appear to be legacy from our pre-Aryan ancestors."[1]

II. ARYANISATION OF BENGAL

As noted above, it was not till a comparatively late period represented by the Epics and the *Manu-smṛiti*, that the people of Bengal first began to imbibe the social and religious ideas of the Aryans. The gradual stages in the progress of the Aryanisation of Bengal are unknown to us. It is certain, however, that one of the earliest steps was an attempt to bring the indigenous people into the framework of Aryan society.[2] This is indicated by the fact that indigenous tribes like the Vaṅgas, the Suhmas, the Śabaras, the Pulindas, the Kirātas, and the Puṇḍras are classed as Kshatriyas in early literature.[3] That some classes of the people of Bengal were raised to the rank of Brāhmaṇas we have no reason to doubt, and the story of Dīrghatamas seems to indicate, what even otherwise appears probable, that there was inter-marriage between the immigrant Brāhmaṇas and the native people. The majority of these people were ultimately classed as Śūdras.[4] It is interesting to note

[1] Chatterji, *Indo-Aryan and Hindi*, p. 31. An exhaustive bibliography of the subject ("Non-Aryan Elements in the Civilisation and Languages of India") is given in *BEFEO*, XXXIV. 433-566.

[2] For an interesting account of this process of the 'gradual Brahmanizing of the aboriginal non-Aryan tribes,' cf. Risley, *The Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, I. xv ff.

[3] *Mbh.* I. 104, II. 51, XIV. 29; *Vishṇu* P. IV. 8. 1; *Matsya* P. 48. 24 ff; *Manu*, X. 44.

[4] For the ethnological significance of this cf. R. P. Chanda, *Indo-Aryan Races*, p. 43.

that according to *Manu-smṛiti* (x. 44) the Pauṇḍrakas and Kirātas, who were originally Kshatriyas, were degraded to the rank of Śūdras because they did not come into contact with the Brāhmaṇas and forsook the Brahmanical rites and customs. This was probably the case with other tribes also. The Kaivartas, for example, are referred to as mixed caste in Manu, but are described as *abrahmaṇya* in the *Vishṇu* Purāṇa. These show that the caste-divisions in the early Aryanised society of Bengal were yet in a state of flux, and further that the adoption of Aryan manners and customs by the indigenous tribes of Bengal was a long and tedious process. It must have required many years, perhaps centuries, before the Aryan immigrants from the Midland and the people of Bengal could be fused together in a rigid framework of Aryan society.

We can hardly doubt that a gradually increasing number of high class Aryans poured into Bengal in the early centuries of the Christian era,[1] either in the wake of military campaigns or for more peaceful pursuits. These included, as already noted above, followers of the different religious sects, Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jaina. The establishment of the political power of the Guptas in Bengal must have not only quickened the pace of these immigrations, but also given an ascendancy to the orthodox followers of Brahmanical religion. In any case, the inscriptions of the Gupta period, which for the first time give us a definite glimpse of the religion and society in Bengal, refer to orthodox Brāhmaṇas performing *smārta* and *śrauta* rites and Purāṇic worship all over Bengal (*supra* pp. 395-96). The growing importance of Bengal as an Aryan settlement is indicated by the fact that even a nobleman from Ayodhyā makes a pilgrimage to Bengal and endows a temple in the Himālayan region in the northern outskirts of the province.[2]

The inscriptions of the fifth and sixth centuries A.D. have preserved the personal names of a few officials and a large number of leading men in different parts of Bengal. A perusal of these names shows the complete domination of Aryan influence in all classes of society, both urban and rural. It is interesting to note the prevalence, even at this early period, of certain name-endings which are used as surnames in Bengal even today: *viz.*, *chaṭṭa*, *varman*, *pāla*, *mitra*, *datta*, *nandin*, *dāsa*, *bhadra*, *deva*, *sena*, *ghosha* and *kuṇḍa*. It is to be noted, however, that personal names in those

[1] In the *Mahābhārata* (I. 216) Arjuna is said to have visited the holy places in Aṅga, Vaṅga and Kaliṅga, and made gifts to the Brāhmaṇas of those places. Vātsyāyana, in his *Kāmasūtra*, (v. 6. 38, 41), refers to Brāhmaṇas of Gauḍa and Vaṅga.

[2] Dāmodarpur CP. No. 5. (*EI*. xv. 141).

days consisted generally of a single word, such as Durlabha, Garuḍa, Kalasakha *etc.* It is difficult to say whether the name-endings in some cases such as Bandhumitra, Dhṛitipāla, Chirātadatta, *etc.* were surnames or parts of names.

An analysis of the place-names mentioned in the early inscriptions of Bengal also shows the strong Aryanisation of the land. Names like Puṇḍravardhana, Koṭīvarsha, Pañchanagarī, Chaṇḍagrāma, Karmānta-vāsaka, Svachchhanda-pāṭaka, Śīlakuṇḍa, Navyāvakāśikā, Palāsavṛindaka are purely Aryan. But as in later days, old non-Aryan names persisted, as is evidenced by Ḍoṅgā (-grāma), Nāgiraṭṭa, Kuṭkuṭa, and Kaṇā-moṭikā. An attempt at Aryanisation of non-Aryan names is also manifest in Pṛishṭhima-pottaka, Goshāṭapuñjaka, Trivṛitā, Khāḍā(ṭā)pāra, Trighattika, Rolla-vāyikā, and Vakhaṭa-sumālikā.[1] Sanskrit technical terms are also used to denote measurements of land.

So far, therefore, as available evidence goes, we may regard the essential features of Aryan society to have been present in Bengal as early as the fifth century A.D. The literary and epigraphic evidences of the subsequent period enable us to postulate a continuous progress of the Aryan features in Bengal society without let or hindrance; and we may presume that the social development took place more or less on the same lines as in the rest of Northern India. It is worthy of note that even during the long rule of the Buddhist Pāla dynasty the orthodox system of caste was upheld as an ideal by the kings (*supra* p. 426).

III. THE CASTES AND SUB-CASTES

The most characteristic feature of the society was the existence of innumerable castes and sub-castes. It is a well-known fact that the division of the people into four *varṇas*, *viz.* Brāhmaṇas, Kshatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras, was merely a theory, except perhaps in the most ancient period with which we are not concerned. By the time Bengal adopted the Aryan culture, numerous castes and subcastes had been evolved, mainly by the development of different arts, crafts and professions, but partly also for other reasons, and tribal, racial and religious factors were at work in gradually adding to their number.[2] There can be hardly any doubt that the numerous castes mentioned in the Smṛitis did actually exist in society, and the differences in the various Smṛitis in their enumerations reflect the

[1] For a philological discussion of the place-names cf. Chatterji-*Lang.* 179-188.
[2] Risley, *op. cit.* I. xv ff.

actual conditions which varied in different localities and at different periods. The authors of the Dharmasūtras and Smṛitis regarded the Vedas as eternal and infallible, and therefore strove hard to bring the actual state of society of their days within the framework of the four *varṇas*. Hence they started with the theory that the numerous castes (and even tribes and races), actually existing in the country, arose from the unions of males with females belonging to *varṇas* differing from their own.[1] This theory, originally applied to the males and females of the four primitive *varṇas*, had to be extended to those of the subsidiary or mixed castes, arising out of their union; for, otherwise it was not possible to account for the numerous castes and sub-castes which continually went on increasing. Even then the *Smṛitikāras* could not follow this process logically *ad infinitum*. According to the *Vishṇu Dharma-śāstra* (16. 7), which belongs to the early centuries of the Christian era, 'the further mixed castes arising from the unions of mixed castes are numberless.' This shows that the society had been divided into quite a large number of castes and sub-castes even before the beginning of the Christian era, and "the writers on Dharmaśāstras practically gave up in despair the task of deriving them, even though mediately, from the primary *varṇas*."[2]

It is needless to point out that while the different castes, mentioned in the Smṛitis, undoubtedly represent the actual state of things, not the least historical value can be attached to the puerile fiction of their derivation from specified union of males and females belonging to different *varṇas*.[3] Yet it must be admitted that throughout the mediaeval period, and down to modern times, much importance has been attached to these theories for ascertaining the position and importance of each caste, even though the different Smṛiti texts often give conflicting accounts of the derivation and status of one and the same caste. There can be hardly any doubt that the people generally believed in this theory of mixed caste, and it exercised a great influence in determining the status of the different castes and sub-castes in the society.

[1] This is the Saṅkara theory. The other explanation is afforded by the Vrātya theory which explains the origin of a number of castes from the sons of the twice-born who became *vrātyas* (fallen from their caste) for not fulfilling the sacred duties (Cf. *Manu* x. 20 ff). For an account of the 'Vrātya and Saṅkara theories of caste' cf. *JASB*. 1902, p. 149. A detailed exposition of the system is given by Kane in his *History of Dharmaśāstra*, Vol. II. Ch. II.

[2] Kane, *op. cit.* 58.

[3] Inter-caste marriages may, of course, give rise to additional castes, in a general way (Risley, *op. cit.* p. XXXVII).

As already noted above, the names and number of the castes and sub-castes varied according to time and localities. The lists of such castes in the different Smṛitis were largely influenced by the local conditions at the time in which they were composed. In order, therefore, to understand the condition in Bengal in this respect we must have access to a text which belongs to Bengal or represents conditions of that region. Although it is difficult to be quite sure or dogmatic in this matter, the *Bṛihad-dharma* Purāṇa and the *Brahma-vaivarta* Pūrāṇa may be regarded as such texts, composed not later than the 13th or 14th[1] century A.D.

The *Bṛihad-dharma* Purāṇa[2] is not very widely known,[3] and is evidently of late origin. It is perhaps later than the 12th century A.D., but there are indications that it reflects the peculiar conditions in Bengal. It authorises, for example, the Brāhmaṇas to eat fish and meat,[4] and divides the non-Brāhmaṇa population into thirty-six castes (the conventional number of castes in Bengal even today), all described as Śūdras.[5] These are characteristic features of society in Bengal as distinguished from the rest of North India. The special emphasis on the sacredness of the river Gaṅgā[6] and the reference to the rivers Padmā and Yamunā (in Bengal)[7] also support the close association of the text with this province.

The text describes[8] how king Veṇa, bent upon violating the rules of *varṇāśrama* (caste and order), deliberately created a number of mixed castes by forcing the unions of males and females belonging to different castes which included not only the original four castes, but also the mixed castes resulting from their union. It differs from the general body of the Smṛitis in deriving the mixed castes, not from the marriage of males and females of different castes, but from their promiscuous union at the bidding of, or under the compulsion exercised by the king. Whether this contains any veiled allusion to any actual historical fact, and refers to forced abolition of strict caste rules about marriage by an unorthodox or heretical king with zeal for reforms, we cannot say. It must be noted, however, that although Veṇa is represented as an opponent to orthodox Brahmanical

[1] For a discussion on these points cf. *Bhāratavarsha,* 1336-37 B.S., Part II, pp. 673 ff.; 1337-38 B.S., Part I, pp. 94 ff.

[2] Edited in Bibliotheca Indica Series. Its *Uttara-khaṇḍa* will be referred to as Part II, and the other portion as Part. I.

[3] For example Kane, who has dealt exhaustively with this kind of literature, does not refer to it.

[4] I, V. 45-46. [5] See *infra.* [6] I. XLII-LVI. [7] I. LII. 38-41.

[8] II. XIII-XIV. All the subsequent references to the mixed castes are to be found in these two chapters.

cults in epics, Smritis and Purāṇas, no other text ascribes to him the origin of mixed castes as we find in the *Bṛihad-dharma* Purāṇa.[1] The castes that arose out of these promiscuous unions are classified as *uttama*, *madhyama* and *adhama saṅkaras*, all having the status of Śūdra.

The names of these castes and their vocations as settled by the Brāhmaṇas during the reign of Veṇa's successor may be enumerated as follows:

1. Uttama (High) Saṅkaras

1. The Karaṇas, who were good scribes and efficient in office-work, were to continue the same vocations and became *sat-śūdras*.

2. The Ambashthas were asked to study Āyurveda and practise as physician; and hence they were called Vaidyas. They were to follow the vocation of Vaiśyas in respect of manufacturing medicines and that of Śūdras in respect of religious ceremonies.

3. The Ugras were to follow the vocations of Kshatriyas and practise military arts.

4. The Māgadha, being unwilling to practise arms as it involves *hiṁsā* (slaughter), which is unrighteous, was made the court-bard and carrier of messages.

5. Tantravāya—weaver.
6. Gāndhika-vaṇik[2]—dealer in spices, scents and incense.
7. Nāpita—barber.
8. Gopa—writer.
9. Karmakāra—blacksmith.
10. Taulika[3]—dealer in *guvāka* (betelnut).
11. Kumbhakāra—potter.

[1] The reference to Veṇa as having caused a confusion of the castes in Manu IX. 67, is explained in a different way by the commentators.

[2] In Ch. XIII the name 'Gāndhika-vaṇik' occurs in the list of Uttama Saṅkaras; but in Ch. XIV, in which the vocations of some of the mixed castes are given, we find simply 'Vaṇik,' and its profession is mentioned as '*gandha-vikraya*' (sale of spices, scents and incense). Hence no question can be raised against their identity. As the name 'Gāndhika-vaṇik' is more expressive and helps us to distingush the members of this caste from the Svarṇa-vaṇiks, we have preferred this name to the simple title 'Vaṇik.'

[3] The reading 'Taulika' occurs in II. XIII, 39; but in II. XIV. 64 the reading 'Tailika' is found. Even in the latter case MS. C reads 'Taulika,' as the footnote shows. In the Vaṅgavāsī edition the reading 'Tailika' occurs in both the chapters.

The words 'Tailika' and 'Tailakāraka' (No. 26 in the list) being synonymous, we have preferred the reading 'Taulika.'

12. Kaṁsakāra—worker in copper and brass. Brazier.
13. Śāṁkhika (Śaṁkhakāra)—conch-shell worker.
14. Dāsa—cultivator.
15. Vārajīvī—betel-vine growers.
16. Modaka—sweetmeat-makers.
17. Mālākāra—florist.

The vocations of the following are not definitely stated but may, in most cases, be gathered from their names.

18. Sūta[1] (bard or carpenter ?)
19. Rājaputra (Rajputs ?).
20. Tāmbūlī[2]—Betel-leaf sellers.

2. *Madhyama (Intermediate) Saṅkaras*

21. Takshan (carpenter).
22. Rajaka (washerman).
23. Svarṇakāra (goldsmith).
24. Svarṇa-vaṇik[3] (trader in bullion).
25. Ābhīra (cowherd or milkman ?).
26. Tailakāraka (oilman).
27. Dhīvara (fisherman).
28. Śauṇḍika (vintner).
29. Naṭa (dancer, acrobat or juggler).
30. Śāvāka, Śāraka or Śāvāra[4] (Sarāk ?).
31. Śekhara.
32. Jālika (fisherman).

[1] The vocation of Sūta is not clearly specified, but is stated simply in the line '*dāse tu krishi-karmāṇi sūte tad-upayogitām.*' Hence Sūta here means most probably a carpenter (who helps the cultivator by manufacturing the implements of cultivation) rather than a charioteer or a bard. So Sūta seems to be the same as Sūtradhāra (carpenter) mentioned in the *Brahma-vaivarta* Purāṇa (I. x. 33). The mention of Dhīvara and Jālika (both fishermen) as two distinct castes encourages us to suppose that the Sūta and Takshan (No 21 in the list) also were distinct castes among the carpenters.

[2] The line stating the profession of Tāmbūlī is missing in the Bibl. Ind. edition of the *Bṛihad-dharma* Purāṇa but occurs in the Vaṅgavāsī edition.

[3] 'Kānaka-vaṇik,' mentioned in II. XIV. 68 where the vocations of some of the castes already mentioned in Ch. XIII have been given, must be regarded to be the same as 'Svarṇa-vaṇik,' the word '*kānaka*' being an adjective formed from '*kanaka*' (gold) and there being no mention of 'Svarṇa-vaṇik' in Ch. XIV. The Vaṅgavāsī edition wrongly reads '*kalika*' for '*kānaka.*'

[4] The Vaṅgavāsī edition reads 'Śāvaka.'

3. Adhama (Low) Saṅkaras or Antyajas, outside the pale of caste (varṇāśrama-vahishkṛita)

33. Malegrahi[1] (?) (a branch of Mal caste ?)
34. Kuḍava (Korwa-boatman ?)
35. Chāṇḍāla (Chāṁḍāl)
36. Varuḍa (Baori ?)
37. Taksha (carpenter ?)
38. Charmakāra (leather-worker)
39. Ghanṭajīvī or Ghaṭṭajīvī[2] (modern Pāṭnī caste)
40. Dolāvāhī (palanquin-bearer)
41. Malla[3] (modern Mālo ?)

The above division into three classes is said to be based on a definite principle *viz.* (1) those whose father and mother both belong to the four primitive castes are regarded as class I; (2) those whose mothers alone belong to one of these primitive castes but fathers belong to class I form class II; (3) those whose father and mother both belong to any mixed caste are relegated to class III.[4] The total number of these mixed castes is said to be thirty-six, though actually forty-one are enumerated. Five of the above must therefore be regarded as later additions. It is interesting to note that even today the conventional number of castes in Bengal is thirty-six.

The Śrotriya Brāhmaṇas are permitted to function as priests only of the twenty mixed castes belonging to class I (*uttama*). The priests of the other castes are said to be degraded (*patita*) Brāhmaṇas, who attain the status of the castes they serve. Reference is also made to Brāhmaṇas called Devala, brought from Śākadvīpa by Suparṇa (Garuḍa) and hence called Śākadvīpī Brāhmaṇas.

[1] The Vaṅgavāsī edition has 'Gṛihi' for 'Malegrahi.'

[2] The reading 'Ghanṭajīvī' (for 'Ghaṭṭajīvī'), which occurs in the Bibl. Ind. edition, is supported by only one MS., *viz.* MS. A. The Vaṅgavāsī edition reads 'Ghaṭṭajīvī.'

[3] The 'Mala' caste, mentioned in II. XIII. 51, seems to be the same as 'Malla' (which is one of the *antyaja castes*), because 'Mala' has been mentioned there as an instance of *antyajas* along with Chāṇḍāla (*sachāṇḍāla-malādayaḥ*).

The Vaṅgavāsī edition reads 'Matta' for 'Malla.' Malla may refer to Māle (Māl, Maler, Māl Pahāria), a tribe of the Rājmahal Hills. Russell regards it as an isolated branch of the Savaras. (*The Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces of India*, IV. 153).

[4] But practically these principles have not been strictly followed in making the classification. For example, the Chāṇḍāla, born of a Śūdra father and Brāhmaṇa mother, has been classed with the *antyajas*, and among the *antyajas* there are some, born of Madhyama Saṅkara males and Vaiśya or Śūdra females.

The issues of a Devala father and Vaiśyā mother were Gaṇaka (astrologer, also called Graha-vipra) and Vādaka.[1] From the body of Veṇa sprang a son called Mlechchha whose sons were Pulinda, Pukkaśa, Khaśa, Yavana, Suhma, Kamboja, Śavara, Khara and others.

Most of the castes enumerated above as belonging to Class I and II are well-known in Bengal,[2] and we may reasonably presume that many, if not all, of these must have developed as distinct castes before the close of the Hindu period. The gradual disappearance of a distinct Kshatriya caste, the progressive assimilation of the Vaiśya with the Śūdra, and the division of the last into '*sat*' and '*asat*' (higher and lower) may also be regarded as applicable to Bengal during the Hindu period.[3]

As regards the status of the different castes, the Karaṇas and the Ambashṭhas are given the positions of pre-eminence. The Ambashṭhas are equated with the Vaidyas, and the Karaṇas, as will be shown later, were identical with or fore-runners of the Kāyasthas. The predominance of Kāyasthas and Vaidyas, among the castes other than the Brāhmaṇas, forms a distinctive and characteristic feature of the social life in Bengal even today. Such castes as Śaṁkhakāra, Dāsa (cultivator), Tantuvāya, Modaka, Karmakāra, and Suvarṇa-vaṇik are well-known in Bengal, but are not generally met with in other parts of India. These considerations support the view that the *Brihad-dharma* Purāṇa reflects the condition of Bengal.

The list of Saṅkara or mixed castes given in the *Brahma-vaivarta* Purāṇa[4] closely resembles that of the *Brihad-dharma* Purāṇa, though there are certain differences in detail. It first mentions Gopa, Nāpita, Bhilla, Modaka, Kūvara, Tāmbūlī, Svarṇakāra and the different classes of Vaṇiks as *sat-śūdras*.[5] It next mentions Karaṇa and Ambashṭha, and enumerates nine castes as born of a Śūdra woman by Viśvakarman born as a Brahmin architect. Of these nine, six, *viz.* Mālākāra, Karmakāra, Śaṁkhakāra, Kubindaka (*i.e.* Tantuvāya), Kumbhakāra and Kaṁsakāra are regarded as good artisans, but the other three, *viz.* Sūtradhāra, Chitrakāra and

[1] No mention of Vādaka is found in the Vaṅgavāsī edition.

[2] For an account of the castes in Bengal cf. Risley, *op. cit.*; J. N. Bhattacharya, *Hindu Castes and Sects* (1896).

[3] The same phenomena are observed in the evolution of the caste-system all over India. Cf. G. S. Ghurye, *Caste and Race in India* (1932), 91 ff.

[4] Edited by Jīvānanda Vidyāsāgara, Part I, Brahma-khaṇḍa Ch. X. vv. 16-21, 90-137.

[5] That the list of Sat-śūdras in the *Brahma-vaivarta* Purāṇa is not exhaustive seems to follow from I. X. 18.

Svarṇakāra were degraded by the curse of the Brāhmaṇas, the first two for neglect of duty, and the third for theft of gold.[1] A class of Vaṇiks, associated with Svarṇakāra (*i.e.* probably Suvarṇa-vaṇik), was similarly degraded. It then gives a long list of degraded (*patita*) mixed castes, which includes Aṭṭālikā-kāra (mason), Koṭaka (builder of houses), Tīvara, Tailakāra, Leṭa, Malla, Charma-kāra, Śuṇḍī, Pauṇḍraka (Pod ?), Māṁsachchheda (butcher), Rāja-putra, Kaivarta (Dhīvara in Kaliyuga), Rajaka, Kauyālī, Gaṅgā-putra, Yuṅgi (Jugī) and Āgarī (Ugra-kshatriya ?).[2]

The *Brahma-vaivarta* Purāṇa mentions a majority of the castes of classes I and II mentioned in the *Bṛihad-dharma* Purāṇa (exceptions are Nos. 4, 6, 10, 14, 15, 18, 25, 29, 30, 31, 32) including five out of the six castes, characteristic of Bengal, referred to above. All the castes in the common list which the *Brahma-vaivarta* Purāṇa regard as high or clean mixed castes are included in class I of the latter. Corresponding to the castes of class III and Mlechchha castes of the *Bṛihad-dharma*, the *Brahma-vaivarta* mentions Vyādha, Bhaḍa, Kola, Koñcha, Haḍḍi Hāḍi), Ḍom, Jolā, Bāgatīta (Bāgdi ?), Vyālagrāhī (Vedia ?) and Chāṇḍālas, all of which are met with in Bengal.

A somewhat detailed account is given of the origin of the Vaidya caste. Aśvinīkumāra, the son of Sun-god, forcibly ravished the wife of a Brāhmaṇa while she was on a pilgrimage, and a son was immediately born. She returned with the child to her husband and reported everything to him. The angry Brāhmaṇa drove her out with her son. By her *yoga* powers she transformed herself into the Godāvarī river, while the son was brought up by Aśvinīkumāra who taught him the medical science and other arts. This son became the progenitor of the Vaidyas.[3]

In conclusion, reference is made to the Brāhmaṇas who were degraded as Gaṇakas for their negligence to the Vedic Dharma as evidenced by their constant study of astrology and astronomy and acceptance of fees for their calculations. These Gaṇakas (most probably a section among them) came to be known as Agradānī for having accepted, first of all, gifts from Śūdras, as well as funeral

[1] The origin of the 'Nava-sāyakas,' a caste-group peculiar to Bengal, may perhaps be traced to these nine castes with a common traditional origin.

[2] Some of the mixed castes mentioned in the *Brahma-vaivarta* Purāṇa are not included here. But even the long list in the Purāṇa is not exhaustive, for after the enumeration of the names of mixed castes the Purāṇa states: "The mixed castes are innumerable; who can mention their names or number?" (I. x. 122).

[3] It is to be noted that, unlike the *Bṛihad-dharma* Purāṇa, the *Brahma-vaivarta* Purāṇa distinguishes Vaidya from Ambashṭha, who is separately mentioned as born of a Vaiśyā mother by a twice born (*i.e.* Brahmin father).

gifts. Mention is also made of Bhaṭṭa, born of Sūta father and Vaiśyā mother, who recited the praises of others, and is probably represented by the Bhāṭas of the present day.

The number, designation and the relative status of the different castes in any society must have varied at times. Reference has already been made above (*v. supra* p. 240) to the story recorded in the *Vallāla-charita* how Vallālasena raised the status of some castes and degraded others. Whatever we might think of this story, it undoubtedly proves that such things were regarded as possible. On the other hand, reference to the Pāla kings as having maintained the system of caste (*v. supra* p. 116) indirectly implies the right and duty of the royal authority to maintain the *status quo* in the sphere of social life. Besides, the innate conservatism of the people renders major social changes a matter of extreme difficulty.

In view of the probability of the change in status and designation of the various castes in course of time, the very close agreement in this respect between the present society in Bengal and that described in the two Purāṇas, mentioned above, must be regarded as very remarkable.

The various castes in Bengal in the nineteenth century A.D. may be broadly classified in four well-defined strata which may be enumerated as follows:[1]

I. Brāhmaṇas, Vaidyas and Kāyasthas.

II. Sat-Śūdras or Clean Śūdras whose touch does not pollute drinking water of the upper classes, and in whose religious functions the Brāhmaṇas can act as priests without degrading themselves. These are: Gandha-vaṇik, Tantuvāya, Modaka (Mayarā), Kumbhakāra, Kaṁsakāra, Teli, Gopa, Bārui, Mālākāra, Nāpita, Karmakāra, Śaṅkha-vaṇik, Chāsī-Kaivarta, Sadgopa, Tāmbūlī. The Svarṇakāra, Sūtradhāra, Goālā (including Ābhīra). Koch and Āgarī (Ugra-Kshatriyas) are also regarded as clean, though not universally.

III. (*a*) Śūdras, who are not regarded as clean;
(*b*) the Brāhmaṇas serving as priests of certain unclean castes; and
(*c*) other degraded Brāhmaṇas.

[1] Views on the relative superiority of the existing castes vary widely, and it is not our intention to express any opinion on the present social condition. Our object is merely to give a very broad review of the present for the sake of comparison with the past. Lest any one's susceptibilities are wounded, it may be added that the description of the present condition is based on Dr. J. N. Bhattacharya's *Hindu Castes and Sects*, and we do not hold ourselves responsible for any opinion expressed by him.

The following are illustrative examples :

(*i*) Suvarṇa-vaṇik, Śauṇḍika, Kalu (oilman), Mālo, Jāliā Kaivarta, Tiyara, Jugī.

(*ii*) The priests of Suvarṇa-vaṇiks, Goālās, Kalus, Rajakas, Bāgdis and Kaivartas.

(*iii*) Agradānīs, Gaṇakas.

IV. Low castes and aboriginal tribes included in the Hindu society, such as Chāmār, Ḍom, Baiti, Bāgdi, Bāori, Pod, Hāḍi, Vediā.

A comparison of the above with the accounts of castes given in the *Brihad-dharma* and *Brahma-vaivarta* Purāṇas would show a striking agreement not only in the general scheme but also in the details. The agreement in respect of the absence of pure Kshatriyas and Vaiśyas, and the composition of group I has already been noted above. Almost all the castes in group II are mentioned in the Purāṇas as *uttama*-Saṅkaras. Some of the differences are more apparent than real. For example, the Telis derive their name from Tula and we have Taulika in the Purāṇa list. The Bārui and the Tāmbūlīs may both be included in the latter. The castes included in group III are all found in the list of *madhyama*-Saṅkaras of the *Brihad-dharma* and *patita* Saṅkaras and Brāhmaṇas of the *Brahma-vaivarta* Purāṇa.

The castes in group IV except Baiti are also found in the list of *adhama*-Saṅkaras, or degraded mixed castes referred to in the two Purāṇas.

A detailed comparison leads to the conclusion that the system of caste as we find in Bengal today does not, in essential features, differ from that depicted in the *Brihad-dharma* and the *Brahma-vaivarta* Purāṇas. Unfortunately the date of none of these works can be fixed with certainty. They are not, however, possibly much later than the 13th century A.D., and as such may be regarded as preserving a picture of the state of society as it existed in Bengal towards the close of the Hindu Period. We may, therefore, legitimately conclude that the framework of caste-system in its final evolution in Bengal during the Hindu period already reached the stage in which we find it today.

Although arts, crafts and professions were generally hereditary, and the different castes normally followed the vocations assigned to them, it is now generally recognised that there was never any absolute rigidity or exclusiveness in actual practice. That the same laxity prevailed in ancient Bengal is positively proved by epigraphic and literary references. Even the Brāhmaṇas, for example, became

soldiers, rulers, administrators and counsellors, and followed other vocations.[1] Literary and epigraphic evidences prove that a Kaivarta served as high royal official (*v. supra* p. 152). The Karaṇas practised medicine and military arts, the Vaidyas became ministers,[2] and the Dāsas served as officials and court-poets.[3]

The mutual relations between the different castes in ancient Bengal cannot be precisely defined, but they had not developed into the strictly rigid system such as prevailed in the nineteenth century A.D. Although marriage among members of the same caste was the ordinary rule, inter-marriage between a male of a higher and the female of a lower caste was regarded as valid down to the last days of the Hindu period.[4] That it was followed in actual practice in Bengal, as elsewhere in India, is proved by isolated references such as occur in the Tippera copper-plate of Lokanātha (*v. supra* p. 88). It mentions that the ancestors of Lokanātha, both on the father's and mother's side, were Brāhmaṇas. His mother's father Keśava is, however, called a Pāraśava, which shows that Keśava's Brāhmaṇa father married a Śūdra lady. The facts, that Keśava was placed in charge of the army, that he was in touch with the king, and that he was held in high esteem by the good, prove that the marriage of a Brāhmaṇa male and Śūdra female was not always even condemned, and the issue of the marriage did not occupy a low status. Lokanātha himself is referred to as a Karaṇa, though it is not quite certain whether he was degraded to this caste on account of his mother, or whether Karaṇa is used here as an official designation and not a caste-name. That such marriage between a Brāhmaṇa and a Śūdra continued down to the end of the Hindu period is proved by the writings of Bhavadeva and Jīmūtavāhana (*supra* pp. 320 ff.), the two leading expositors of the sacred law and usage in Bengal.

Jīmūtavāhana says in his *Dāyabhāga*[5] that marriage is allowed between a male of a higher *varṇa* with a woman of the lower *varṇa*, including the Śūdra, and quotes Manu (III. 12-13) as his authority. He adds, however, that both Manu and Vishṇu have strongly censured the union of a twice-born with a Śūdra woman (and quotes Manu III. 15-17), and therefore Śaṅkha (Smṛiti) omits the Śūdra in describing a wife eligible for a twice-born man. This contradiction has been a puzzling one both in ancient and modern

[1] See *infra*, p. 584.
[2] These have been discussed later in connection with Karaṇas and Vaidyas.
[3] Cf. Bhāṭerā CP. No. II, of Īśānadeva (*supra* p. 256).
[4] Kane, *op. cit.* 52 ff. 447 ff.
[5] Ch. IX. 1-11. Colebrooke's translation (1868), pp. 159-61.

times, but the solution offered by the great Bengal jurist is certainly not complimentary, either to his scholarship and intelligence, or to the moral ideas of his countrymen. "Hence these evils," says he, "do not ensue on the procreation of offspring upon a Śūdra woman not married to (the Brāhmaṇa) himself; but a venial offence is committed, and a slight penance is requisite." In other words, though marriage with a Śūdra woman involves degradation and loss of caste, illicit union with her is reckoned as a trivial offence. The commentator Śrīkṛishṇa still further improves upon this legalised moral depravity by explaining the words "not married to himself" as "married to another man." In other words, adultery with a married Śūdra woman is much less heinous than marriage with her.

All these definitely prove the existence of inter-caste marriages, though they show a growing desire to put a stop to the marriage of a Brāhmaṇa with a Śūdra girl. But there is no doubt that such marriage was regarded as valid, and did actually take place. This follows not only from the reference to the "accomplished Śūdra wife of a Brāhmaṇa" in Bhavadeva Bhaṭṭa's *Prāyaśchitta-prakaraṇa*,[1] and the rules of inheritance laid down by Jīmūtavāhana regarding the Śūdra wife of a Brāhmaṇa and her son, but also from the injunctions by the latter[2] regarding the competence of a wife to assist in the performance of sacrifices and other sacred rites. Jīmūtavāhana, after citing Manu (IX. 86-87) to the effect that only a wife of the same *varṇa* is so competent, observes that 'on failure of a wife of the same caste, one of the castes immediately following may be employed in such duties.' So, on the failure of a Brāhmaṇī, the Kshatriyā wife of a Brāhmaṇa may perform these duties, "but not a Vaiśyā nor a Śūdrā though married to him." This involved the fiction that a woman may be espoused but may not rank as wife, as this rank only belongs to one who is competent to assist in the performance of religious rites. This fiction is hardly supported by the authority quoted by Jīmūtavāhana, but he applies it in expounding the law of inheritance laid down by Nārada (XIII. 25-26, 51-52). Although no distinction is made by Nārada among the wives of different castes, Jīmūtavāhana takes these passages to refer only to 'women actually espoused but not having the rank of wives.'

The above passages confirm the view noted above, that down to the close of the Hindu period inter-caste marriage was in vogue in Bengal, but the marriage of the upper castes with Śūdra girls

[1] *PRP*. 90. It is to be observed also that marriage with a lower caste (including Śūdra) is not included in the list of forbidden marriages, entailing a penance, given by Bhavadeva on p. 117.

[2] *DB*. *Ch*. XI. 47-48; Colebrooke's tr. 197-99.

was gradually coming into disfavour. They further indicate a growing distinction in the status of wives of different castes. In particular, the Śūdra wife of a Brāhmaṇa, Kshatriya and Vaiśya was being subjected to special disabilities, insults and indignities, not contemplated in the Dharma-śāstras, though the validity of her marriage and her right to maintenance after the husband's death were not yet questioned.

Restrictions about inter-dining, like those about inter-marriage, were also evolved through stages of slow growth. The older Smṛitis do not impose any restriction about drinking water and taking food except upon the Brāhmaṇas, and these restrictions, applied only against the Śūdras and the very low castes, were not very rigid in character.[1] A fair idea of the position in this respect, towards the close of the Hindu period, may be obtained from the writings of Bhavadeva Bhaṭṭa.

As regards drinking water, Bhavadeva prescribes[2] penances for all the four castes only for drinking water touched by, or kept in the vessel of, a Chāṇḍāla or *antyaja*. Lighter penance is prescribed for drinking water of a Śūdra. The *antyaja* is defined as a group of seven low castes *viz.* Rajaka, Charmakāra, Naṭa, Varuḍa, Kaivarta, Meda and Bhilla.[3]

As regards food,[4] Bhavadeva quotes older authorities prescribing penances for a Brāhmaṇa eating food touched by a Chāṇḍāla or cooked (*anna*) by *antyajas,* Chāṇḍālas, Pukkaśas, Kāpālikas and a number of specified low castes such as Naṭa, Nartaka, Takshaṇa, Charmakāra, Suvarṇakāra, Śauṇḍika, Rajaka, Kaivarta, and Brāhmaṇas following forbidden vocations. He also quotes a passage from Āpastamba prescribing a *kṛichchhra* penance for a Brāhmaṇa who takes food cooked by a Śūdra. In commenting on this he says :

> "It is to be inferred that the penance would be reduced by a quarter and half for a Brāhmaṇa eating the food respectively of a Vaiśya and a Kshatriya, and a Kshatriya eating the food respectively of a Śūdra and a Vaiśya, and half the penance is prescribed for a Vaiśya eating the food of a Śūdra."

As no authority is cited for this, it is to be inferred that there existed none, and Bhavadeva merely legalised a practice that was slowly growing in Bengal. Bhavadeva further quotes Āpastamba and Hārīta to show that certain kinds of food of a Śūdra, including those cooked with oil or parched (grain), and *pāyasa,* may be eaten with immunity. Further, he quotes Parāśara to the effect that if in times of distress (*āpat-kāla*) a Brāhmaṇa takes food in a Śūdra's house, he becomes pure by feeling sorry for it (*manastāpena*).

[1] Cf. Kane, *op. cit.* pp. 789 ff.
[2] *PRP.* 51 ff.
[3] *Ibid.* 118.
[4] *Ibid.* 58 ff.

It would be quite clear from the above analysis of the views of the foremost Smārta leader in Bengal in the twelfth century A.D., that restrictions about food and drink between the different castes were far from being as rigid as we see it now. The restrictions about drink affected the Brāhmaṇas alone, and only in respect of Śūdras and a few low castes definitely specified. The restrictions of food were also at first confined to the Brāhmaṇas and only in respect of food cooked by the Śūdras and certain low castes. Later, these were gradually extended to other castes. But even then the Brāhmaṇas, far less members of any other caste, were not degraded and did not lose caste by taking food from another caste, and only penances were prescribed for even the worst transgression, such as taking food of a Chāṇḍāla.

A review of the available data, cited above, leaves no doubt that both as regards inter-dining and inter-marriage, the restrictions originally concerned only the relations between a Brāhmaṇa and low castes. It is probable that these gradually came to be regarded as marks of aristocracy or orthodoxy, and were extended not only among other castes, but also among the various branches of the same caste. In the final stage marriage was absolutely confined within the narrow fold of one of the numerous sub-castes, branches, or clans into which a caste was sub-divided, and inter-dining was similarly restricted and forbidden with a caste or sub-caste regarded as occupying an inferior status. But it is certain that this stage was far from being reached by the end of the twelfth century A.D.[1]

An important factor in the evolution of this final stage is the growing fiction that almost all non-Brāhmaṇas were Śūdras. The origin of this fiction is perhaps to be traced to the extended significance given to the term *Śūdra* in the Purāṇas, where it denotes not only the members of the fourth caste, but also those members of the three higher castes who accepted any of the heretical religions or were influenced by Tāntric rites. The predominance of Buddhism and Tāntric Śāktism in Bengal, as compared with other parts of India, since the eighth century A.D. perhaps explains why all the notable castes in Bengal were regarded in the *Bṛihad-dharma* Purāṇa and other later texts as Śūdras, and the story of Veṇa and Pṛithu might be mere echo of a large-scale reconversion of the Buddhists and Tāntric elements of the population into the orthodox Brāhmanical fold.

It would, perhaps, be wrong to conclude that there were no Kshatriyas or Vaiśyas in Bengal. The fact, however, remains that we have no reliable reference to any Kshatriya or Vaiśya family.

[1] Cf. Ghurye, *op. cit.* 91-93.

The Senas, who called themselves Kshatriyas, were immigrants from Karṇāṭa, and the Pālas are not designated as Kshatriyas till three hundred years had elapsed after their accession to power. But negative evidence of this kind cannot be regarded as conclusive, particularly as constant reference to Kshatriyas and Vaiśyas is found in the writings of Jīmūtavāhana, Bhavadeva Bhaṭṭa and other writers on sacred laws and usages in Bengal.

IV. THE BRĀHMAṆAS

While the Kshatriyas and the Vaiśyas were all but unknown in Bengal, the Brāhmaṇas played a dominant part in its history. It has already been mentioned above (*supra* pp. 395-96) that Brāhmaṇas, belonging to various *gotras, pravaras* and branches of Vedic school and performing *Śrauta* rites, had settled in large number all over Bengal by the sixth and seventh centuries A.D. Their number was constantly increased by fresh immigrations from Upper India for which there is abundant epigraphic evidence. A large number of inscriptions from the eighth to the twelfth century A.D. refer to the settlement in Bengal of Brāhmaṇas hailing from Lāṭa (Gujarāt), Madhyadeśa, and such individual localities as Kroḍañchi or Kroḍañja (Kolāñcha), Tarkāri (in Śrāvasti), Muktāvastu, Hastipada, Matsyāvāsa, Kuṇṭīra and Chandavāra.[1]

[1] Pāla Ins. Nos. 2, 23, 31, 39, 49; *EI.* XIII. 292; *IB.* 24, 67, 157. Kolañcha, and Kroḍañchi or Kroḍañja may be identical. It is frequently mentioned in inscriptions and genealogical works (cf. *supra* p. 262; *IC.* II. 358). Chandavāra may be identified with Chandwār near Etawa in U.P., well-known in Muhammadan history (*IB.* 151). Muktāvastu is referred to in three grants of the Paramāra king Arjunavarman, and the Mandhata Plates of his successor Devapāla dated 1225 A.D. (*EI.* IX. 107; D. C. Ganguly, *History of the Paramāra Dynasty,* 201) as the home of the Brāhmaṇa donees, but cannot be identified. Hastipada may be identified with the village of the same name. mentioned in the Kudopali Grant of the Somavaṁśī ruler of Kośala as the place from which one of the donees had immigrated (*EI.* IV. 254 ff.).

There is great controversy about the location of 'Tarkāri, within the limits of Śrāvasti,' the Brāhmaṇas from which place, according to Silimpur Ins. (*EI.* XIII. 283), settled in the village of Bālagrāma in Varendrī. Tarkāri was a famous settlement of the Brāhmaṇas and Karaṇas, and is referred to as Tarkāri, Tarkārika, Tarkāra, Ṭakkāra, Ṭakārī, Ṭakkārikā, *etc.* in a large number of inscriptions (*EI.* I. 336, III. 348, 353, IX. 107; *IA.* XVII. 118, XVI. 204, 208). Dr. R. G. Basak, while editing the Silimpur inscription, concluded from the expression *Sakaṭī-vyavadhānavān* that Bālagrāma was separated from Tarkāri by the (river) Sakaṭī. This places Śrāvasti in North Bengal. In support of his suggestion Dr. Basak points out that some of the Purāṇas locate Śrāvastipura in Gauḍa. Mr. J. C. Ghosh (*IA.* 1931, pp. 14 ff. and *IC.* II. 358-59) and Rao Bahadur K. N. Dikshit (*EI.* XXIII. 103) agree with Dr. Basak's view. They point out in support of it that two inscrip-

In course of time the Brāhmaṇas in Bengal were divided into various sub-castes or branches such as Rāḍhīya, Vārendra, Vaidika,[1] and Śākadvīpī. Towards the close of the Hindu period the Brāhmaṇas were also classified according to their *gāṁi*, a title derived from the name of the village endowed to the family by the king or a private donor. These *gāṁis* are referred to in books and inscriptions of the twenfth and thirteenth centuries, and the titles derived from them are still in use.[2] Detailed account of the origin of these classes forms the subject-matter of an extensive literature known as *Kulajis*. The nature and historical value of these comparatively modern works will be discussed in App. I to this chapter, and it will suffice here to give a very brief outline of the story recorded by them.

(*a*) *Rāḍhīya and Vārendra Brāhmaṇas*

Ādiśūra, king of Gauḍa, invited five Brāhmaṇas from Kanauj to perform some sacrifices, as the Brāhmaṇas of Bengal were ignorant of Vedas. These Brāhmaṇas were ultimately settled in Bengal and were granted villages for maintenance. They derived their surnames (*gāṁi*) from these villages, and were the forefathers of the entire Brāhmaṇa community of modern Bengal with the exception of a few minor groups like the Vaidikas, who came at a later period. The Saptaśatīs, consisting of the remnants of the original Brāhmaṇas,

tions from Assam place Kroḍañcha and Vaigrāma in Sāvathi or Śrāvasti, and Vaigrāma is identical with the village of Baigram in the Bogra district. Mr. N. G. Majumdar (*IA*. 1919, pp. 208 ff.) opposes this view and identifies Śrāvasti with the well-known city in Oudh. He thinks that *Sakaṭī-vyavadhānavān* .... may be taken to mean that Bālagrāma was bounded by Sakaṭī. Monier-Williams gives the meaning of *vyavadhāna* as "separate," "divide" *etc*. In our opinion the verse in question means that Bālagrāma was divided by the (river) Sakaṭī. Attention may be drawn to the verse 6 of the Silimpur inscription, which mentions about the eastern division (*pūrva-khaṇḍa*) of Bālagrāma. An inscription from Orissa (*IA*. XVII. 121) places the village Ṭakkārikā in the Madhyadeśa. More than three quarters of a century intervened between the two inscriptions from Assam, referred to above. Śrāvastī, in which the village Kroḍañcha was situated, as has been mentioned in one of these inscriptions, may be referring to the famous Śrāvastī in Madhyadeśa. On the whole, it is more reasonable to place Tarkārikā in Śrāvastī in Oudh.

[1] The existence of the Rāḍhīya, Vārendra and Vaidika Brāhmaṇas in Bengal before the close of the Hindu period is proved by a passage in Halāyudha's *Brāhmaṇa-sarvasva* (*infra*, p. 582). Classification, according to localities, into Rāḍhīya, Vārendra, Vaṅgaja *etc.* is found also among other castes such as Kāyastha, Vaidya, Bārui etc.

[2] Ādāvāḍī CP. of Daśarathadeva (*supra* pp. 253-54), 181-82. See also App. II.

seven hundred in number, were degraded to a lower rank and have disappeared without leaving any trace.

In the time of king Vallālasena the Brāhmaṇas came to be known as Vārendra and Rāḍhīya according to the localities in which they settled, and were classified in several grades of honour and distinction (*kulīna*) according to personal qualifications. These grades were revised from time to time, and more than hundred such revisions took place before the fifteenth century A.D., when they became hereditary and were organised on the lines which have continued till today.

Even apart from the numerous discrepancies in details in the different versions, we can hardly regard the main story as historical in character.[1] As already noted above, a few particulars, depicting social features which were present in the late age when the *Kulajis* were composed, such as the classification of the Brāhmanas into Rāḍhīya and Vārendra and their organisation into *gām̐is*, were true of the Hindu period and may, therefore, be regarded as having some historical basis. But this can hardly be said of the central theme on which the whole story is based. In the light of the epigraphic evidence that we possess, it is difficult to believe that there was a dearth of Veda-knowing Brāhmaṇas in Bengal in the time of Ādiśūra, even if we accept the earliest date proposed for him, *viz.* 654 Śaka (=732 A.D.). Nor is it possible to accept the view that the Brāhmaṇas who settled in Bengal before the time of Ādiśūra were only seven hundred in number and almost entirely vanished from Bengal, whereas the descendants of five Brāhmaṇas multiplied to millions in course of a thousand or twelve hundred years. Our doubt is increased by the complete absence of any reference to the story of the five Kanauj Brāhmaṇas or to Kulīnas in the large number of inscriptions later than the eighth century A.D., some of which record the history of important Brāhmaṇa families for several generations.

Further, in judging of the historical character of the *Kulaji* story, we should not attach too much importance to the fact that several Brāhmaṇa families did actually migrate from Madhyadeśa to Bengal, for Brāhmaṇa families from Madhyadeśa are also found to have settled in Mālava, Dakshiṇa Kośala, Oḍra-*vishaya* and in many other countries.[2] There was a large settlement of Brāhmaṇas from Magadha in the Pāṇḍya kingdom in the Far South.[3] Indeed, the migration of Brāhmaṇas from one province to another was a

[1] For full discussion cf. App. I. The same view is maintained by R. P. Chanda after elaborate discussion (*Indo-Aryan Races*, Ch. v).

[2] *JASB.* N.S. XII. 295; *EI.* XXIII. 105; XXII. 137. 165.

[3] Madras Museum Plates of Jaṭilavarman (*IA.* 1893, p. 74).

common affair in those days. Nor can we regard such migrations into Bengal as indicating in any way either the dearth of Brāhmaṇas in that province or their inferiority in status and knowledge. For a good number of Brāhmaṇa families from Bengal, well versed in the Vedas, settled in Orissa, Mālava, and the Deccan, and received grants of lands from the ruling chiefs.[1]

(b) *The Vaidika Brāhmaṇas*

According to the tradition preserved in the *Kulajis,* king Śyāmalavarman of Gauḍa, probably the Varman king Sāmalavarman (*supra* p. 203), had five Brāhmaṇas brought from Kānyakubja (or Benares) in Śaka 1001 and settled them in Bengal, as the Bengal Brahmins did not maintain sacrificial fire and were not well-versed in the Vedas. According to another version, the Vaidika Brāhmaṇas, settled on the banks of the Sarasvatī river, left their homes for safer regions when they came to know, by their astrological calculations, of the impending invasion of the Yavanas. Some of them came to Bengal and settled in Koṭālipāḍā (Faridpur) under the patronage of king Harivarman.

These Vaidika Brāhmaṇas, who came from Upper India, came to be known as Pāśchātya (Western). Another section of Vaidika Brāhmaṇas, known as Dākshiṇātya, is said to have come from Drāviḍa country (South India) and Utkala (Orissa).

Halāyudha (*supra* pp. 355 ff.) observes in his *Brāhmaṇa-sarvasva* that the Rāḍhīya and Vārendra Brāhmaṇas have no knowledge of the Vedic texts which are studied only by the Utkalas and the Pāśchātyas. These possibly refer to the two branches of the Vaidika Brāhmaṇas, who must have thus settled in Bengal before the close of the twelfth century A.D. The words might, however, mean in a general way the Brāhmaṇas of Utkala and Pāśchātya without any reference to the Vaidika Brāhmaṇas of Bengal. Save this doubtful reference we have no sure testimony to the existence of the Vaidika Brāhmaṇas in Bengal before the end of the Hindu period. The reference to the two kings Sāmalavarman and Harivarman in the *Kulajis* together with an approximately correct date for their reigns

[1] Two Brahman families from Varendrī settled in the Deccan, and received grants of lands from the Rāshṭrakūṭa kings Govinda IV (A.D. 933) and Khoṭṭiga (A.D. 968) (*IA.* XII. 248; *EI.* XXI. 265). The Paramāra Muñja (A.D. 972-997) granted lands in Mālava to a Brahman emigrant from Vilvagavāsa in Dakshiṇa Rāḍhā (*EI.* XXIII. 105). The Gaṅga Devendravarman (c. A.D. 808), and some Tuṅga kings (11th century) donated lands in Orissa to Brahmans emigrated from Rāḍhā and Varendrī (*EI.* XXIII. 77; *JASB.* N. S. XII. 295; *Arch. Survey of Mayurbhanj,* p. 156.)

invests their account with an historical character, and we may provisionally accept as true, that a few Brāhmaṇas, with a special knowledge of Vedic texts, migrated to Bengal during the rule of the Varmans. The details of the story, conflicting in themselves, are hardly worthy of credence.

(c) *Other classes of Brāhmaṇas*

Of the classes of Brāhmaṇas other than those mentioned above, the Sārasvatas are mentioned by Vallālasena in his *Dāna-sāgara* and the Śākadvīpīs in an inscription dated A.D. 1137[1] as well as in the *Bṛihad-dharma* Purāṇa. According to the *Kulajis* the former came from the banks of the Sarasvatī river at the invitation of the Andhra king Śūdraka, and the ancestors of the latter, also called Graha-vipra, were brought by Śaśāṅka, king of Gauḍa, in order to perform some ceremonies for curing himself of a disease. Several other classes such as Vyāsa, Parāśara, Kauṇḍinya and Saptaśatī Brāhmaṇas are referred to in *Kulaji* texts, but there is no reliable evidence of the existence of any of these classes, under these names, before the close of the Hindu period.

The main functions of the Brāhmaṇas, as laid down in the Smṛitis, were to perform religious rites, to serve as priests at those of others, and to study and teach the sacred texts. There can be no question that many of them devoted themselves to these orthodox duties, and we have reference to many famous scholars and priests. They generally led simple and unostentatious lives, and the ideal of plain living and high thinking was actually realised by many of them. Some were fortunate enough to gain wealth by officiating as priests in the sacrifices or religious rites performed by kings (*supra* p. 281) and members of the royal family[2] and the rich aristocracy. But apart from sacrificial fees, donations, large or small, were made to Brāhmaṇas by kings and private persons, as such gifts were considered

[1] An inscription (*EI.* II. 330) from Govindapur, in the Gaya district Bihar, dated Ś. 1059=A.D. 1137, states that the Maga Brāhmaṇas, who sprang from the sun's own body, were brought to India from Śākadvīpa by Śāmba. The first of these Maga Brāhmaṇas was Bharadvāja, whose family had a hundred branches. In one of them were born two brothers Manoratha and Daśaratha, who were induced to accept service under Varṇamāna, king of Magadha. Manoratha's son Gaṅgādhara, a counsellor and friend of the king Rudramāna of Magadha, composed this record. Gaṅgādhara married a daughter of Jayapāṇi, an official of the king of Gauḍa. It proves that a family in Bengal was socially related to the Śākadvīpa Brāhmaṇas in the first half of the twelfth century A.D.

[2] *IB.* 8-9; 67.

to confer spiritual merits (*puṇya*) on the donors. Many such examples are found in contemporary records.[1] The Deopārā inscription of Vijayasena[2] informs us how the king made rich gifts of silver, gold, pearls, emeralds and jewels to the Brāhmaṇas versed in the Vedas, and the wives of these poor fellows had to be taught to recognise and distinguish the precious articles by their similarity with objects well-known to them. In spite of obvious exaggeration of such statements we may well believe that many learned Brāhmaṇas gained wealth and affluence, and others secured their means of livelihood, by the generous gifts of the king and the public, so that they could pursue their high vocations in life without being troubled with cares for the maintenance of their families.

On the other hand, as already noted above, the Brāhmaṇas followed many other vocations, both high and low. We hear of two Brāhmaṇa royal dynasties in Samataṭa in the 7th century A.D.[3] Two important Brāhmaṇa families, renowned for their scholarship and knowledge of sacred Vedic rites and sacrifices, served the Pāla and Varman kings as counsellors and generals (*v. supra* pp. 116, 202), maintaining at the same time their high position in the Brahmanical society. Apart from these actual examples, the Smṛitis and Nibandhas refer to various other vocations followed by Brāhmaṇas, some of which, like agriculture, were approved, and others, covering almost all walks of common life, were disapproved. These condemned vocations, of which a long list is given by Bhavadeva,[4] include teaching the Śūdras, and officiating at their sacrificial rites. Nothing perhaps more strikingly illustrates the moral and intellectual perversion of the age brought about by the caste system. While no blame attached to the Brāhmaṇas who served as ministers and generals—and Bhavadeva himself belonged to this category[5]—one following the sacred vocation of teaching and officiating at religious rites, which are enjoined upon him by the Smṛitis from time immemorial, was degraded to the lowest rank of society, simply because the object of his care was a person of the lowest caste and who, for that very reason, required all the more the ministrations of the Brāhmaṇas, who were repositories of the sacred learning and practices.

[1] Ānuliā CP., v. 10 (*IB.* 86, 89-90) refers to gift of myriads of excellent villages consisting of lands excessively growing paddy. Cf. also Bhowal CP. of Lakshmaṇasena and other inscriptions of the Senas.

[2] v. 23 (*IB.* 48, 54).

[3] These are the dynasties to which Śīlabhadra and Lokanātha belonged (*supra* pp. 85, 88).

[4] *PRP.* 60.

[5] *IB.* 29.

The result of this policy was the creation of new classes of Brāhmaṇas, for the idea gradually grew that the Brāhmaṇas serving these castes attained their rank.[1] Even today we have a number of such castes, called Varṇa-Brāhmaṇas, who serve as priests to Suvarṇa-vaṇiks, Goālās, Kalus, Rajakas, Bāgdis and Kaivartas. These priests form practically independent castes. "The good Brāhmaṇas will not take even a drink of water from their hands, and inter-marriage between them is quite out of the question."[2] This final stage was not reached before the end of the Hindu period, for Bhavadeva prescribes only penance for 'removing the sins of eating the food of these Brāhmaṇas,' but the system was in the making. It is interesting to note that 'the practice of medicine' and painting and other arts were some of the condemned vocations, and the Devala Brāhmaṇas were degraded for cultivating the study of 'astrology.' It is evident that in the opinion of the orthodox Brāhmaṇas, the pursuit of these arts and sciences was more reprehensible on the part of a Brāhmaṇa than to accept the high post of minister or lead armies in battles. This attitude is mainly responsible for the fact that a decline in secular studies in various arts and sciences set in towards the close of the Hindu period, and has continued ever since.

v. Non-Brahman castes

1. *Karaṇa—Kāyastha*

Next to the Brāhmaṇas, the Karaṇas appear to have been the most important caste in ancient Bengal. This not only follows from the passage in *Bṛihad-dharma* Purāṇa quoted above, but also from the high offices and position actually occupied by members of this caste. Reference has already been made to the powerful chief Lokanātha who is described as a Karaṇa (*v. supra* pp. 88, 575), and a Karaṇa-Kāyastha is referred to in the Gunaighar CP.[3] as the Minister in charge of Peace and War. The author of a medical treatise, called *Śabda-pradīpa*, describes himself as belonging to a Karaṇa family (*Karaṇ-ānvaya*).[4] He was a court-physician himself, and his father and great-grandfather served in the same capacity two well-known kings—Rāmapāla (*v. supra* p. 155) and Govindachandra (*v. supra* p. 196) of Bengal. Sandhyākara Nandī, the famous poet and author of *Rāmacharita* (*v. supra* p. 150), describes

[1] Cf. the passage from *Bṛihad-dharma* Purāṇa (II. XIV. 75) referred to above.
[2] J. N. Bhattacharya, *op. cit.* 125.
[3] *IHQ*. VI. 56, 58.
[4] *Egg.-Cat.* V. 974 ff.

his father as 'the foremost amongst the Karaṇas (*karaṇānām=agraṇī*) and Minister of Peace and War.[1]

Karaṇa occurs as the name of a caste in the old Sūtras and Smṛitis, and perhaps also in the *Mahābhārata*.[2] But according to Kshīrasvāmin's commentary on *Amarakosha*, Karaṇa also denotes a group of officers like Kāyastha.[3] The lexicographer Vaijayantī (11th century A.D.) seems to take Kāyastha and Karaṇa as synonymous[4] and explains it as scribe. This agrees with the view of *Bṛihad-dharma* Purāṇa noted above, and the identity of Karaṇa and Kāyastha is also proved by epigraphic evidence.[5] It is worthy of note, that the Karaṇa caste, whose members performed the same vocations as the Kāyasthas, gradually disappears in Bengal, after the close of the Hindu period, whereas the Kāyastha caste does not come into prominence before the same period. It would not, therefore, be unreasonable to conclude that the Karaṇa merged itself into the Kāyastha, and these two castes were ultimately amalgamated in Bengal as in other parts of India.[6]

The Kāyastha is mentioned as a royal official in the *Vishṇu* and *Yājñavalkya* Smṛitis. According to the former he wrote the public documents, and the commentary to the latter explains his office as that of an accountant and scribe. The term is used in the same sense in the inscriptions from the eighth to the eleventh century A.D., and even later. The *Rājataraṅgiṇī* refers to the Brāhmaṇa Śivaratha as a roguish Kāyastha in the twelfth century A.D. The term Karaṇa is also used in the same way.[7]

[1] *RC.*, *Kavi-praśasti*, v. 3. [2] *Cf.* Kane, *op. cit.* 74.

[3] The Karaṇika and Kāyastha are distinguished in the Gurmhā CP. dated 870 A.D. (Bhandarkar's *List of Inscriptions*, No. 34) where the Mahāmantrin is called Karaṇika and the Mahākshapaṭalika, a Kāyastha.

[4] *Kāyasthaḥ syāl-lipikaraḥ Karaṇo=kshara-jīvanaḥ lekhako=kshara-chuñchuś=cha.*

[5] Jalhaṇa who wrote two copper-plate grants of Gāhaḍavāla king Govindachandra describes himself as *Kāyastha* in one (*EI.* IV. 104) and *Karaṇik-odgato* in another (*EI.* VIII. 153). In the Ajaygarh Rock inscription of the Chandella king Bhojavarman (*EI.* I. 330) Karaṇa and Kāyastha are used as interchangeable terms (*e.g.* the descendants of Vāstu are called Karaṇa in v. 4 and Kāyastha in v. 7).

[6] According to Dr. J. N. Bhattacharya, there is a Karaṇa clan of Kāyasthas in North Bihar, and the Uttara-Rāḍhīya Kāyasthas of Bengal claim to be Karaṇas (*op. cit.* 188-89). Cf. Russell, *op. cit.* III. 418. The Karaṇa caste in C.P. and Orissa traces its descent from Chitragupta like the Kāyasthas in Bengal (*ibid.* 343).

[7] Kane, *op. cit.* 76-77. A Karaṇika Brāhmaṇa is referred to in the Dhoḍ (Udaipur State, Rājputāna) inscription, dated A.D. 1171 (Bhandarkar's *List*, No. 350). A Brāhmaṇa donee of the Nidhanpur CP. of Bhāskaravarman (7th cent. A.D.) is called '*nyāya-Karaṇika*' (*EI.* XII. 75). Two Brāhmaṇa donees in an inscription at Madura, dated 1586 A.D., are called Karaṇikya and Karaṇika (*EI.* XII. 167; donees Nos. 119, 120).

It is evident, however, from a record of Amoghavarsha[1] that there was a Kāyastha caste in Western India (*valabha-Kāyastha-vaṁśa*) as early as the 9th century A.D. The existence of Kāyastha as a caste in Northern India is also indicated by references to *Gauḍa-kāyastha-vaṁśa*,[2] *Kāyastha-vaṁśa*,[3] *Mathur-ānvaya-kāyastha*,[4] and *Kāyastha-kaṭāriy-ānvavāya*, migrated from Mathurā,[5] in inscriptions dated respectively in A.D. 999, V.S. 124x (1183 to 1193 A.D.), A.D. 1328, and A.D. 1288. Several inscriptions indicate that a Kāyastha race, descended from Vāstu and hence called Vāstavya Kāyastha, lived near Kālañjara in or before the eleventh century A.D. One of these inscriptions[6] specifically states that the Vāstavya Kāyasthas followed the profession of a Karaṇa, and it refers to the caste both as Karaṇa and Kāyastha. Two later Smṛitis *Uśanas* and *Vedavyāsa*, refer to Kāyastha as a caste. The *Uśanas* says that the word Kāyastha is "compounded of the first letters of *kāka* (crow), Yama, and *sthapati* to convey the three attributes of greed, cruelty and the spoliation (or paring) characteristic of the three. The *Vedavyāsa* Smṛiti includes the Kāyastha among Śūdras along with barbers, potters and others."[7]

Mythical accounts of the origin of the Kāyasthas are supplied by some early records. Soḍḍhala, who flourished in the middle of the 11th century, states that he was born in the race of the Kāyastha, named Vālabha (*Vālabho nāma kāyasthānāṁ vaṁśa*). He traces his descent from Kalāditya, the brother of king Śilāditya. Kalāditya was an incarnation of the *gaṇa* called Kāyastha, and was an ornament of the Kshatriyas (*Kāyastha-nāmno Māheśvara-gaṇasy=āvatāraḥ kshatriya-vibhūshaṇaṁ Kalāditya...*).[8] The king Śilāditya, referred to, was in all probability a king of the Maitraka dynasty of Valabhī, which was Kshatriya by caste.[9] According to this statement the Kāyasthas were descendants of the Kshatriyas. The Rewa inscription of a minister of the Kalachuri king Karṇa, dated 1049 A.D.,

[1] *EI.* XVIII. 251. The writer of the Gurmhā CP. (Bhandarkar's *List*, No. 31), dated 870 A.D., is called *Mahākshapaṭalika Kāyastha*. But whether the Kāyastha here refers to a caste cannot be definitely settled. [2] *EI.* XII. 61.

[3] *Proc. ASB.* 1880 (p. 78). The inscription was found at Bodh-Gayā and refers to the *guru* of the king of Kāśi.

[4] *EI.* XII. 46. [5] *Ibid.* XIX. 50. [6] *Ibid.* I. 332.

[7] Kane, *op. cit.* 76.

[8] *Udayasundarī-kathā*, *GOS.*, p. 11. [9] Beal-*Records*. II. 267.

[10] *EI.* XXIV. 101 ff. The portion containing the account is mutilated, and so the account cannot be fully understood. The editor of the inscription has summarised all the important points in his introductory remarks (pp. 108-109). As he has pointed out, v. 34 seems to refer to the Kāyasthas as '*dvijas*,' though, on account of the mutilation of the record, it is not clear how this was reconciled with their Śūdra origin stated in vv. 36-38.

however, gives a different account of the origin of the Kāyastha caste to which he himself belonged. We are told that a great sage named Kāchara, born of Śiva, gave a boon to his Śūdra (*turīya-janmā*) servant that he would have a son of well-known and righteous deeds whose caste would thereafter be known by the name of Kāyastha, since he had innumerable merits in his *kāya* (body). We are next told that in the Kāyastha race, sprung from this son, were born wise and meritorious diplomats, the last one being the minister of Karṇa. According to this account the Kāyasthas would seem to be of Śūdra origin. It may be noted that the derivation of the word Kāyastha in this record agrees with that in *Naishadha-charita* (XIV. 66), but is diametrically opposed to that given in *Uśanas Saṁhitā* Smṛiti quoted above. The Ajaygarh inscription of Nāna, a minister of the Chandella king Bhojavarman, traces the origin of the Kāyasthas to the sage Kāśyapa.[1]

The reference to *prathama-kāyastha* (or *jyeshṭha-kāyastha*) in the records of the fifth, sixth and eighth centuries A.D. in Bengal (*v. supra* pp. 266, 272, 273) shows that it had not yet come to denote a caste. The Tibetan work *Pag Sam Jon Zang* mentions Daṅgadāsa as a Kāyastha (writer or ministerial officer) of Dharmapāla.[2] If true, this would also push the rise of the Kāyastha caste in Bengal to a date later than the eighth century A.D. The mention of *Gauḍa-Kāyastha-vaṁśa*, as noted above, shows that the Kāyasthas were recognised as a caste in Bengal by the tenth century A.D.[3] It is, however, very surprising that the Kāyastha is not mentioned either in the *Bṛihad-dharma* or in the *Brahma-vaivarta* Purāṇa.

According to the *Kulajīs* the Kāyasthas of Bengal, at least their upper classes, are descended from the five attendants of the five Brāhmaṇas who came to Bengal at the invitation of king Ādiśūra. The historical value of this story has been discussed in Appendix I. According to Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar and others[4] the

[1] *JASB*. VI. 882.

[2] *Pag Sam Jon Zang*, ed. S. C. Das, Introd., p. III. On p. v there is reference to a Kāyastha-vṛiddha.

[3] Śrīdhara wrote *Nyāya-kandalī*, a commentary on *Padārtha-dharma-saṁgraha* by Pratāpadāsa. He states that he was a resident of Bhūrisṛishṭi, in Dakshiṇa-Rāḍhā, and wrote this book at the request of Pāṇḍudāsa, foremost of the Kāyastha race, in Śaka 913=A.D. 991 (Kāsi ed. p. 269). Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar, in order to establish the existence of Kāyastha clan in Bengal in the pre-Muslim period, refers to the above passage of *Nyāya-kandalī* (*IA*. 1932, p. 50). It does not, however, necessarily follow from the statement in *Nyāya-kandalī* that Pāṇḍudāsa of the Kāyastha race was an inhabitant of Bengal, or that the book was written in Bengal, though this appears to be the most plausible view.

[4] *IA*. LXI. 48; N. Vasu, *Kāyasther Varṇa-nirṇaya*, p. 184; J. C. Ghosh in *IHQ*. VI. 60 ff.

Kāyasthas were descended from Nāgara Brāhmaṇas who had a large settlement in Bengal long before the eighth century A.D. These are supposed to have originally migrated from Nagarkot in the Punjab to various parts of Gujarāt and Kathiawar Peninsula, Anandapur (also called Nagar) in Lāṭa being one of their chief settlements. That some Brāhmaṇas came to Bengal from Lāṭa, as from other parts of India, has already been mentioned above (*v. supra* p. 579). But the evidence in support of a large-scale immigration of Nāgara Brāhmaṇas is hardly convincing. The Nāgara Brāhmaṇas in Vaṅga, mentioned in the *Kāmasūtra* of Vātsyāyana, may refer to the Brāhmaṇas of the city (*nagara*). The fact that the surnames of Nāgara Brāhmaṇas such as *datta, ghosha, varman, nāga* and *mitra* also occur in the names of the Kāyasthas of Bengal does not signify much, as these surnames or name-endings were commonly used all over India about that period. The existence in Pañchakhaṇḍa (Sylhet) of a *liṅga* called Hāṭakeśvara, which is said to have been the tutelary deity of the Nāgara Brāhmaṇas, hardly justifies the assumption of a large settlement, for even individual settlers might introduce their own peculiar cult. Besides, there is nothing to show that the worship of Hāṭakeśvara was exclusively confined to the Nāgara Brāhmaṇas.

2. *Vaidya—Ambashṭha*

The Vaidya, like the Kāyastha, does not appear to have formed an important caste in ancient Bengal. Like Kāyastha, the term Vaidya originally denoted an important profession *viz.* that of the physician. It is difficult to say when this professional group was developed into a caste. The earliest reference to Vaidya as a distinct social group occurs in three South Indian inscriptions of the eighth century A.D.[1] The members of this group occupied very high

[1] These inscriptions are:

I. The Velvikuḍi Grant of Neḍuñjaḍaiyaṇ, Year 3 (*EI.* XVII. 291-309).

II. The Madras Museum Plates of Jaṭilavarman (Neḍuñjaḍaiyaṇ) (*I.A.* 1893, pp. 57 ff).

III. Annamalai inscriptions of Mārañjaḍaiyaṇ, dated in Kali Era 3871 (=769-70 A.D.) (*EI.* VIII. 317-321).

They all belong to the reign of one and the same Pāṇḍya king (for the identity, cf. *EI.* XVII. 295) and refer to several Vaidya chiefs who occupied high offices in the state. One of them, referred to as the crest-jewel of the Vaidyakas (*Vaidyaka-śikhā-maṇi*) in No. I, and simply as Vaidya in No. III, was a great general, the prime minister (*uttara-mantrin*), and a great favourite of the king. As regards another great feudal chief, who was probably the younger brother of the first (*EI.* XVII. 296), it is said (No. II.) that his birth had conferred splendour on the

positions in state and society, and according to Dr. H. Krishna Sastri's interpretation, one of them at any rate was regarded as a Brāhmaṇa. But there is no definite reference to Vaidya as a caste in Bengal before the 12th century A.D. The Bhāṭerā copper-plate Grant of king Īśānadeva (*v. supra* p. 256) refers to his minister (*paṭṭanika*) Vanamālī Kara as *Vaidya-vaṁśa-pradīpa* (brilliant light in the race of Vaidyas). This, as well as the fact that a Karaṇa family served as hereditary royal physicians in Vaṅga during the eleventh and twelfth centuries A.D., goes against the assumption that the Vaidya, as a caste of physicians, was definitely recognised as a distinct social unit in Vaṅga long before the close of the Hindu period.

The Vaidya as a caste-name does not occur in the old and genuine Smṛitis. The *Uśanas* Smṛiti[1] refers to a caste called *Bhishak* (physician) born of illicit union between Brāhmaṇa male and Kshatriya female, and designates it as Vaidyaka. A mythical account of the origin of the Vaidya caste is given in *Brahma-vaivarta* Purāṇa, as noted above, and also in a passage, which is said to be a quotation from *Skanda* Purāṇa, but does not actually occur in the printed text.[2] The former distinguishes Vaidya from Ambashṭha,[3] but the latter identifies the two, as is the case also in *Bṛihad-dharma* Purāṇa. Ambashṭha as the name of a mixed caste, born of a Brāhmaṇa father and Vaiśya mother, is well known, and occurs in

Vaidya race (*Vaidya-kula*) of Vaṅgalaṇḍai which was famous for (skill in playing) musical instruments, singing and music. Another chief, Maṅgalarāja Madhuratara (perhaps identical with the first), an *ājñapti* of one of the grants, is called a Vaidyaka, and a master of the Śāstras, a poet and an orator. The expression *Vaidya-kula* undoubtedly indicates a social group whose members are also referred to as simply Vaidya or Vaidyaka. We are indebted for these references to Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri.

[1] *An. S.*, v. 26.

[2] At least we have not been able to trace it. The passage is quoted in *Jāti-tattva-vāridhi* and *Viśvakosha*. It may be summarised as follows: "Once a Vaiśya girl offered a drink to sage Gālava who was very thirsty. The sage gave her a boon that she would have a son who would purify the family. The girl then told the sage that she was unmarried. The sage took her to the hermitage. The other sages held that the words of Gālava must be honoured, and Dhanvantari, the divine physician, would be born of her. So they put a child made of Kuśa grass on the lap of the girl with the recitation of Vedic *mantras*, and infused life into it. Thus a boy was created. He was called Vaidya, as he was born from Veda, and also Ambashṭha because he was born on the lap or fixed in the family of *ambā* (mother). He was taught medical sciences by the sages and was called Amṛitāchārya (Umesh Chandra Gupta, *Jāti-tattva-vāridhi*, I. 36; *Viśvakosha*, *s.v.* *Vaidya-jāti*).

[3] The Uśanas also distinguishes Ambashṭha from Vaidyaka.

early Dharmasūtras and Smṛitis. Manu prescribes the art of healing as his vocation (x. 8, 47). The identity of Vaidya and Ambashṭha has been generally assumed throughout the post-Hindu period.[1] It is not unlikely, therefore, that the Vaidya was an offshoot of the Ambashṭha caste. But there is no definite evidence of the prior existence of the Ambashṭha caste in Bengal and, in view of what has been said above, it is not likely to have evolved from the professional group of physicians. On the other hand, some Kāyasthas in Bihar and U. P. call themselves Ambashṭhas,[2] and the *Sūta-saṁhitā* identifies the Ambashṭhas with the Māhishyas.[3]

The *Kulajis* refer to Ādiśūra both as Ambashṭha and Vaidya, and also regard the Sena kings as Vaidyas. But the texts in which these views are expressed can hardly claim much historical value, and the utmost that can be said is that they preserve the belief and the tradition current in the sixteenth and following centuries.

3 *The Kaivarta—Māhishya*

The revolt in Northern Bengal during the reign of Rāmapāla (*v. supra* pp. 150 ff) and the rule of Divya and his two successors indicate the importance of the Kaivarta caste to which they belonged.

The Kaivarta is referred to in Manu (x. 34) as an alternative name, current in Āryāvarta, of Mārgava or Dāsa, who is born of a Nishāda father and an Āyogava mother, and subsists by working as a boatman. The Jātakas refer to the fishermen as Kevattas (=Kaivartas).[4] According to the *Brahma-vaivarta* Purāṇa, Kaivarta is born of Kshatriya father and Vaiśya mother, but it seems to imply that the Kaivarta was degraded in Kali-yuga by his association with the Tīvara and was known as, or adopted the vocation of, a *dhīvara* or fisherman. Bhavadeva Bhaṭṭa also refers to the Kaivarta as one of the seven *antyaja* or low castes, as noted above. According to ancient Smṛitis the offspring of a Kshatriya father and a Vaiśya mother is known as Māhishya,[5] whose origin is thus

[1] Bharata Mallika, the famous Vaidya author of *Chandra-prabhā* and *Bhaṭṭi-ṭīkā*, who lived in the 17th century A.D., calls himself a Vaidya and Ambashṭha, and has quoted in the former work three passages from *Vyāsa*, *Agniveśa*, and *Śaṅkha* Smṛitis to prove the identity of the two. Whether these passages are genuine or not (the passage from *Śaṅkha*, *e.g.* does not occur in the printed text), they indicate the view current in his age.

[2] J. N. Bhattacharya, *op. cit.* 188. Russell, *op. cit.* III. 417.

[3] Kane, *op. cit.* 91 (*s. v. Māhishya*).

[4] Fick, *Sociale Gliederung*. 302.

[5] Gautama (IV. 20); Yājñavalkya (I. 92); Kane, *op. cit.* 91.

identical with that of Kaivarta as given in the *Brahma-vaivarta.* These ancient accounts serve to explain the present state of things in Bengal.[1] The Māhishyas of Eastern Bengal, also known as Hālika Dāsa and Parāśara Dāsa, are now regarded to be the same as Chāshī Kaivartas of Midnapore and other districts of Western Bengal. Both of these form important sections of the Hindu community. There are many *zamindars* and substantial land-holders among them, and in Midnapore they may be regarded among the local aristocracy. This position is fully in keeping with the part played by them during the Pāla rule. On the other hand, the Dhīvaras or fishermen in East Bengal are known as Kaivarta. According to *Amara-kosha,* the Kaivartas include both Dāsa and Dhīvara. This, added to the evidence of the *Brahma-vaivarta* Purāṇa, Manu and the Jātakas, referred to above, indicates that the Kaivartas were from ancient times divided into two sections, the cultivators and fishermen.[2] The tradition recorded in the *Vallāla-charita* (*v. supra* p. 240) that Vallālasena improved the status of the Kaivartas, and made them a clean caste so that they might serve as menials to upper castes, evidently refers to this lower section. On the whole, it would not be unreasonable to infer that the Kaivartas who are referred to in *Vishṇu* Purāṇa (IV. 24. 8) as *abrahmaṇya,* were an old aboriginal tribe who, like many others, were merged into the Aryan society and affiliated to the mixed caste known as Māhishya.

4. *Low castes*

Regarding the many other castes mentioned above that existed during the pre-Muslim period our knowledge is very meagre. But attention should be drawn to some of them who were regarded as almost beyond the pale of society. A number of these castes or tribes are mentioned in *Bṛihad-dharma* and *Brahma-vaivarta* Purāṇas

[1] The account of the present condition of the Kaivartas or Māhishyas is based on Dr. J. N. Bhattacharya's *Hindu Castes and Sects* (pp. 279-281) and the Report submitted by Mr. J. S. Sen, a Deputy Magistrate, dated Dacca, 13th July, 1907, to the Government of Bengal. Both of these are quoted with approval in *Māhishya-vivṛiti* by Basanta Kumar Ray (4th Edition, Dacca 1322 B.S.), a book written with a view to explain the origin and importance of the Māhishya community. We do not hold ourselves responsible for the opinions quoted.

[2] The *Bṛihad-dharma* Purāṇa, as noted above, includes the caste 'Dāsa' (cultivator) as an *uttama-saṅkara* and Dhīvara (fisherman) as *madhyama-saṅkara.* These two might refer to the two sections of the Māhishyas or Kaivartas who are not otherwise mentioned in the text. (Cf. Halāyudha's lexicography on the Kaivartas.)

and have been noted above. A few of them are referred to as *antyajas* by Bhavadeva, and reference has already been made above to their status and designation in connection with the impurity attached to their food and drink (*v. supra* p. 577). The early *Charyā-padas*[1] of Bengal refer to Ḍoma, Chaṇḍāla and Śavara. The first two are still well-known in Bengal and occupy the lowest stratum in society. The Śavaras are frequently referred to in literature associated with Bengal, and probably figure in Pāhārpur sculptures. Their primitive and even indecent practices influenced the higher classes, as will be seen later. The Ḍomas lived outside the town and were regarded as untouchable. They built baskets and looms (*tānt*). The Ḍoma women were of loose character and moved about singing and dancing.[2] The Śavaras lived in hills. Their women folk wore ear-rings and decorated themselves with peacock-tail. and garlands of *guñja* seeds.[3] The Chaṇḍālas are said to have occasionally abducted married women from their homes.[4] It appears from the Naihati CP.[5] of Vallālasena that the Pulindas lived in forests in or near the border of Bengal, and their women, too, like the Śavarīs, were fond of garlands of *guñja* seeds. The terracotta plaques at Pāhārpur illustrate the habits and physical appearance of aboriginal tribes of this class. A string of leaves round the waist forms the only clothing of both males and females. The latter neatly dress the hair, and wear ornaments of jungle leaves and flowers, and necklaces of beads and *guñja* seeds. The men sometimes wear boots, and have a cuirass for the breast, bows, and quivers containing arrows. Even the women used bows and daggers, and in one case, a woman carries a deer or other wild animal which was presumbly hunted by her and formed their staple food.[6]

VI. Socio-Religious Rites, Ceremonies and Festivals

A distinctive feature of the orthodox Hindu society is the series of semi-religious rites (*saṁskāras*) concerning almost every stage of a man's life, from conception in the mother's womb to death, or

[1] These have been discussed above (*supra* pp. 383-388). Their language represents the oldest specimen of Bengali. They were probably composed between 950 and 1200 A.D. (*supra* p. 384.)

[2] *BGD.* 19, 32.

[3] *Ibid.* 43.

[4] *Ibid.* 60, 73.

[5] v. 8 (*IB.* 72, 77).

[6] *Paharpur.* 64-65, Pl. XLIX. Dikshit takes the figures to be Śabaras, but it is better to regard them as representatives of wild tribes like Śavaras, Pulindas, Bhillas, Kirātas *etc.* who are known, from literature, to have lived in the forest regions in Bengal or on its border. For illustrations cf. Pl. LII. 127; LV. 137.

even beyond it. We know in a general way that these *śrauta* and *smārta* rites were performed since the fifth and sixth centuries A.D. (*v. supra* p. 395), when Brāhmaṇas, learned in the Vedas, began to settle in Bengal in large numbers. But we have no definite knowledge of how these *saṁskāras* were performed in Bengal till towards the close of the Hindu period. It is only as late as the 11th and 12th centuries A.D., when Vedic studies made great headway in Bengal (*v. supra* p. 396), that we have the works of Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva, Jīmūtavāhana, Aniruddha Bhaṭṭa, Vallālasena, and others (*supra* pp. 320 ff., 351 ff.) which throw light on the Brahmanical society of those days. From these sources we learn that the life of the orthodox Hindus, specially the Brāhmaṇas, in Bengal was characterised by the various purificatory rites and ceremonies prevalent in other parts of India. *viz.*, *Garbhādhāna* (the ceremony of impregnation), *Puṁsavana* (the ceremony to ensure the birth of male progeny), *Sīmant-onnayana* (the ceremony of parting of the hair), *Soshyantī-homa* (performance of a *homa* which was meant for easy delivery on the part of the wife). *Jāta-karman* (the ceremony performed at the birth of a child), *Nishkramaṇa* (the ceremony of taking out a child for the first time into open air), *Nāma-karaṇa* (the ceremony of naming the child), *Paushṭika-karman* (the ceremony for the nutrition of the child), *Annaprāśana* (the ceremony of giving a new-born child solid food to eat for the first time), *Naimittika-putra-mūrdhābhighrāṇa* (the ceremony of occasional smelling of the son's head by the father), *Chūḍākaraṇa* (the ceremony of tonsure), *Upanayana* (the ceremony of investing the boy with the sacred thread), *Sāvitra-charu-homa* (the ceremony of offering oblations with *charu* to Savitṛi), *Samāvartana* (the ceremony on the student's return from his teacher's house), *Vivāha* (marriage), and *Śālā-karman* (the ceremony on the occasion of entrance into a newly built house). In almost all these ceremonies the domestic fire was first to be consecrated with the performance of a rite called *kuśaṇḍikā*, and *homas* such as the *Mahāvyāhṛiti*, *Śāṭyāyana* *etc.* were to be performed with the citation of relevant Vedic *mantras*. The usual procedure of the main *homa* connected with the principal function was as follows. At first sacrificial fuel, soaked with clarified butter, was silently thrown into the fire; then the *Mahāvyāhṛiti-homa* was performed with the citation of relevant Vedic *mantras*; next the main *homa* was conducted with the use of necessary Vedic verses; then the *Mahāvyāhṛiti-homa*, followed by the silent offer of fuel, soaked with clarified butter, into the fire, was repeated. The *Śāṭyāyana-homa* and some other operations ending with the chanting of the *Vāmadevya-sāman* were performed at the end of the whole function to allay the sins that might have arisen

out of mistakes committed consciously or unconsciously. Finally proper fees were paid to the Brahmin priest.

A short description of these ceremonies, especially as they were observed by the Sāmavedins, is given below in order to show their distinctive features.[1]

The ceremony of impregnation (*Garbhādhāna*) used to be performed after dusk on the sixth or eighth day from first menstruation. In this ceremony the husband was to wear clean clothes, smear his body with scents, and take his seat by the side of his wife (already seated on blades of *kuśa* grass) with his face turned towards the east. He was then to touch a certain part of his wife's body with his right hand, and mutter relevant Vedic verses invoking the gods for impregnation. After giving to the wife a mixture of the five products of the cow (*i.e. pañcha-gavya*), the husband was to accept, in the hem of his cloth, various fruits offered by his wife after tying them in a piece of yellow cloth, and to return them to his wife. Such acceptance and return were repeated thrice.

The ceremony of *Puṁsavana,* which was to be celebrated on an auspicious day at the beginning of the third month of pregnancy, might be performed in two ways. According to the first method, the husband was to take his bath in the morning, kindle a fire named *Chandra,* perform *kuśaṇḍikā* ending with the muttering of the *Virūpāksha* hymn, seat his wife on blades of *kuśa* on his right to the western side of the fire with her face turned towards the east, and after silently offering fuel, soaked with clarified butter, into the fire, perform the *Mahāvyāhṛiti-homa*. He was then to take his stand at the back of his wife, touch her navel with his right hand after touching her right shoulder, and mutter *mantras* to ensure the birth of a male child. According to the second method, a defectless sheath of a fresh *vaṭa* bud (*vaṭa-śuṅgā*), furnished with two fruits, was collected, with the citation of *mantras,* from a north-eastern branch of a *vaṭa* tree, after besmearing the sheath seven times with the powders of barley (*yava*) and pulse (*māsha*). This sheath was then pounded with a piece of stone by a *Brahmachārin* or an unmarried girl or a pregnant woman or a Brahmin who was well versed in, and regularly studied, the Vedas. While being thus pounded the sheath was to be soaked with dew-water according to the local custom. The husband then tied this herb in a piece of

[1] The description of these ceremonies as well as of the *kuśaṇḍikā* is based upon the MS. of Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva's *Karmānushṭhāna-paddhati* in the Dacca University Library (MS. No. 502). The performance of the *homas etc.* and the payment of fees to priests, being constant features in these ceremonies, will not be repeated in the descriptions.

cloth and pressed its juice into the right nostril of his wife, seated by the side of the sacred fire, with his face turned towards the west. While thus pouring the juice, the husband was to pronounce a Vedic verse for a male progeny.

In the ceremony of *Sīmantonnayana,* which was performed in the fourth, sixth or eighth month from pregnancy, the husband was to take his bath in the morning, perform *Vṛiddhi-śrāddha,* kindle a fire called *Maṅgala,* consecrate it with *kuśaṇḍikā,* and seat his wife on blades of *kuśa* to his right on the western side of the fire with her face turned towards the east. He was then to take his stand behind his wife with his face turned towards the east, and tie round his wife's neck a pair of ripe figs having a common stem, after stringing these fruits with a piece of thread of silk and adding to them *nimba,* white mustard, *bhallātaka etc.* for the sake of protection. According to the local custom a pair of Vāsudeva's feet were made with gold or some other metal and tied to the wife's neck with the same purpose along with natural grains of barley. Next the husband was to part his wife's hair, first with *darbha-piñjalis*[1] for a number of times, and then with a reed (*śara*), a spindle filled with yarn, a white quill of a porcupine, *etc.* He was then to show her the *kṛiśara* (a kind of food) prepared with sesamum, rice and *māsha,* and finish the main function with the performance of the *homas etc.* Next, some Brahmin women, who had sons and whose husbands were living, were to take the wife to the altar, bathe her with the water contained in the pitcher, and perform all other rites which were conducive to her welfare (*maṅgala-kṛitya*). The wife then ate up the *kṛiśara* with a quantity of *ghee* poured on it.

In *Śoshyantī-homa* the wife was to play no part at all, although this rite was meant for her easy delivery and was performed at a time when she was in the mature stage of pregnancy. In this ceremony the husband was to take his bath, consecrate the fiire with *kuśaṇḍikā,* silently offer fuel, soaked with *ghee,* into the fire, and perform the *Śoshyantī-homa* by offering oblations with the mention of the intended name of his future son.

The *Jāta-karman* ceremony did not require any fire. As soon as a son was born, the father said: "Don't sever the artery, don't allow the child to suck the mother's breast." Thus prohibiting (the nurse), he took his bath, performed *Vṛiddhi-śrāddha,* and rubbed the child's tongue, first with the powder of *vrīhi* and *yava* taken with the thumb and the ring-finger of his right hand, and then twice with

[1] A *darbha-piñjali* is formed when two blades of *kuśa,* each of the length of a *pradeśa,* are tied in the middle with another piece of *kuśa* blade of the same length.

ghee and gold. It should be mentioned here that this powder of *vrīhi* and *yava* was to be prepared on a piece of stone by a *brahmachārin*, or a virgin girl, or a pregnant woman, or a Brahmin who was well versed in, and regularly studied, the Vedas. Next, giving his permission with the words 'Sever the artery, allow the child to suck the mother's milk,' the father again took his bath.

It should be mentioned here that in those days no temporary hut was constructed for child-birth; one of the permanent living rooms was used for the purpose, and this room was deemed pure as soon as the period of impurity due to child-birth was over.

In the ceremony of *Nishkramaṇa*, which was celebrated on the third day of the third bright half of a lunar month from the date of the child's birth, the child was bathed in the morning. After dusk the father stood with his face towards the moon. The mother wrapped the child in clean and sanctified clothes, went with it to the left side of the father, stood with her face towards the north, and handed over the child to the father with its head turned towards the north. Then the mother went to the father's right side and stood with her face turned towards the west. The father then showed the child the moon, offered *arghya* to the moon, and handed over the child to its mother with its head turned towards the north. He next performed the purificatory rites and entered the house. In this way the child was to be shown the moon on three other third days of the bright halves of lunar months, and libation of water was to be offered to the moon on these occasions.

The ceremony of *Nāma-karaṇa* was, according to the local custom, celebrated after the expiry of twelve or hundred-and-one nights, or on the birth-day, though the *Gṛihya-sūtras* ordain that this ceremony was to be performed after the expiry of ten nights, hundred nights, six months, or a year. In this ceremony the father took his bath in the morning, performed the *Vṛiddhi-śrāddha*, and consecrated the fire named *Pārthiva* with *kuśaṇḍikā*. The mother then handed over the child (covered with clean clothes) to the father, and took her seat on the left side of her husband. The father next performed *homa* for the pleasure of the presiding deities of the child's birth-day and star, whispered the child's name first into the mother's ear and then into that of the child, and handing over the child to the mother, performed *Mahāvyāhṛiti-homa* etc.

The ceremony of *Paushṭika-karman*, which was meant for ensuring the vitality of the child, was performed on every *janma-tithi* or *purṇimā* of every month in the first year. In this ceremony a fire called *Balada* was required, and the father was to perform the different *homas* almost in the same way as in *Nāma-karaṇa*.

In *Anna-prāśana*, which was celebrated on an auspicious day

of the sixth month, the father was to take his bath in the morning, perform *Vṛiddhi-śrāddha,* consecrate the fire named *Śuchi* with *kuśaṇḍikā,* silently offer fuel, soaked with ghee, into it, perform the *Mahāvyāhṛiti-homa,* offer oblations to Hunger, Thirst *etc.,* and give food into the mouth of the child with citations of *mantras.*

It is to be noted that the present custom of placing a pen, an ink-pot, a gold or silver coin, a piece of earth, and the like for examining the leanings of the child was not in vogue, at least among the Brahmins, in those days, and that the ceremonies of *Nāma-karaṇa* and *Anna-prāśana* were celebrated at different times.

The ceremony of *Naimittika-mūrdhā-bhighrāṇa* (*i.e.* the occasional smelling of the son's head by the father) seems to have been peculiar with the Bengal Brahmins. It was performed especially when the father returned home after a long sojourn. In this ceremony the father touched the heads of his sons in order of age with both his hands, muttered three *mantras* for their long life, smelt their heads with the citation of a *mantra,* and chanted the *Vāmadevya-sāman.*

The ceremony of tonsure (*Chūḍā-karaṇa*) might be celebrated in the first or third year according to the custom of the family. It required the performance of *Vṛiddhi-śrāddha,* consecration of a fire called *Satya,* and performance of *homas etc.* During *Chūḍā-karaṇa,* a cup of bell-metal containing hot water and a razor made of copper (or a mirror in its stead) were placed to the south of the fire, and a barber took his stand there with an iron razor in his hand; on the north, bull's dung, sesamum, rice, beans (*māsha*), kidney-beans (*mudga*), *kṛiśara etc.,* were placed; and on the east, three pots filled with *vrīhi, yava, tila, māsha etc.* were kept. The shaving was done with the iron razor; the copper one (or the mirror) was meant only for touching the head with. First the father shaved certain parts of the child's head after seasoning the hair with hot water and touching it with the copper razor (or its substitute, the mirror), and then the barber, who was adorned with flowers *etc.,* was to give the finishing touch. The hair, thus severally collected, was first to be placed, according to the local custom, on bull's dung contained in an earthen pot held by a young friend of the child, and then the whole was to be thrown into the forest. Some hung it to the branch of a bamboo-tree.

Upanayana (or investiture with the sacred thread) is one of the most important sacraments for a twice-born. For a Brahmin boy, the proper age for *Upanayana* was the eighth year from conception or birth. In case the boy failed to undergo *Upanayana* at that age, the time could be extended up to his sixteenth year; but after that he was deemed *Sāvitrī-patita,* and therefore unworthy

of *Upanayana*. The procedure of this ceremony was briefly as follows. The father of the boy was to take his bath in the morning and perform *Vṛiddhi-śrāddha*. Then he himself, or an Āchārya selected by him, or a religious student (*brahmachārin*, in case no Āchārya was available), was to kindle a fire called *Samudbhava* and consecrate it with the performance of *kuśaṇḍikā*. He then conducted the boy, who was to take his meal in the morning, to the northern side of the fire, had his head shaved along with the *śikhā* (*i.e.* the tuft of hair that was left on the crown of his head), bathed him, made him put on a silken garment or a piece of white and untorn cloth made of cotton, adorned him with ornaments such as ear-rings, and seated him on his right side. The Āchārya then offered fuel, soaked with ghee, into the fire, performed *Mahāvyāhṛiti-homa*, offered oblations several times into the fire, and performed the function of *Añjali-pūrana*. The boy then asked the Āchārya for *Upanayana*, whereupon the latter asked the former his name, and when he knew it from the boy, held the boy's right hand by the thumb in his own right hand and went round the fire. The Āchārya next touched, with his right hand, first the boy's right shoulder and then his navel, breast *etc.* and muttered Vedic *mantras*. Then, after touching the boy's left shoulder with his left hand, he instructed the boy to collect sacrificial fuel, to work, to avoid sleep by day, to be a *brahmachārin*, and so on. After the boy had consented to abide by his instructions, the Āchārya made the boy wear a three-fold girdle of *muñja* grass, a sacred thread (*upavīta*) and the skin of a black-antelope, taught the *Sāvitrī* first by fourth parts, then by halves and then with the *Mahāvyāhṛitis* (*viz.*, *bhūḥ*, *bhuvaḥ* and *svaḥ*), and gave him a staff made of *vilva* or *palāśa* wood. The length of the staff was to be determined by the height of the boy's body. After taking this staff the boy collected alms first from his mother and sister, and then from others including his father, and offered these to the Āchārya, who then performed the *Samid-dhoma, Mahāvyāhṛiti-homa, Śāṭyāyana-homa etc.* Priestly fee was then offered to the Āchārya or, if the father himself was the Āchārya, to the Brahmin who conducted the function. The boy had to pass the whole day at that place. At dusk he finished his evening prayers, offered oblations to the fire and saluted it. He then silently ate the food collected by begging, after mixing it with clarified butter only. While eating he used only the three fingers, *viz.*, the middle finger, the ring-finger and the thumb, and held the dish with his left hand. He then sipped water. In this way the boy had to worship fire daily in the morning and evening till the ceremony of *Samāvartana*; but the method of taking food was to be followed by him till his death.

On the fourth day from *Upanayana, Sāvitrī-charu-homa* was to be performed, in the fire called *Samudbhava*, by the father, or his substitute or a religious student or an Āchārya appointed by the father. For the preparation of the *charu*, a mortar, a pestle, a vessel (*chamasa*)—all made of *varuṇa* wood—, a winnowing-basket made of bamboo, and *vrīhi etc.* were required. After the function was over, a cow was to be given to the Āchārya, or, if the father himself performed the duties of the Āchārya, to the Brahmin who conducted the ceremony.

Being thus invested with the sacred thread, the students began their studies in right earnest under the supervision of their fathers or some other teachers selected by their guardians. The subjects studied by them were generally the following:—Vedas, Dharmaśāstra, Purāṇa, the Epics, Arthaśāstra, Gaṇita, Mīmāṁsā, Jyotiḥśāstra, Kāvya, Tarka, Vyākaraṇa, Alaṁkāra and Chhandas;[1] but from Halāyudha's statement in his *Brāhmaṇa-sarvasva* that he wrote this work because he found that the Brahmins of Rāḍhā and Varendra did not study the Vedas, and therefore did not know the Vedic rites properly, it seems that though the Brahmins always claimed to have been versed in the Vedas, in reality they did not usually study these ancient works with much interest and earnestness. As a matter of fact, there were many among the Brahmins who did not care to study the Vedas at all.[2] However, besides the above-mentioned subjects, the Brahmins sometimes also read Āyurveda, Astra-veda, Āgama (*i.e.* Tantra)[3] *etc.* Higher education was, however, by no means confined to the Brāhmaṇas, and the examples of Vallālasena (*v. supra* pp. 353 ff) and Kāntideva's father[4] prove that kings and nobles also were noted for learning and scholarship.

The ceremony of *Samāvartana* was performed when the student finished his studies and returned home with the permission of his teacher. In this ceremony the father of the student took his bath and performed *Vṛiddhi-śrāddha.* Then he himself, or an Āchārya selected by him, or a *brahmachārin* (if an Āchārya be not available) kindled a fire named *Tejas*, consecrated it with the performance of

[1] For an idea of the branches of knowledge regarded as important in ancient times one might compare the list of subjects in which Bhavadeva is said to have been efficient (*IB.* 34, 39) and also the list of works drawn upon by Sarvānanda in his *Ṭīkā-sarvasva*. The Brāhmaṇas referred to in the Pāla records are said to be proficient in Vedas, Vedānta, Pada-vākya, Pramāṇa, Mīmāṁsā, Tarka, and Vyākaraṇa.

[2] Aniruddha Bhaṭṭa also refers to the lack of Vedic study (*Pitṛi-dayitā*, p. 8).

[3] Cf. *GL.* 83.

[4] For Kāntideva, cf. *supra* pp. 134-35. His father is said to have been efficient in *subhāshita, Rāmāyaṇa, Mahābhārata* and the Purāṇas.

kuśaṇḍikā, and performed *Samid-dhoma* and *Mahāvyāhṛiti-homa.* He then seated the boy on his right side and offered oblations to the fire. When the sacrifices connected with the ceremony of *Samāvartana* were over, the student (*brahmachārin*) fed the Brahmins, took his meal, had his head and beards shaved with only a tuft of hair (*śikhā*) left on his head, put on defectless clothes and ornaments, wore a garland on his head and a pair of leathern shoes, had a bamboo stick (his former staff being thrown into the fire), mounted a cart drawn by two bulls (*go-yuga*) and came to the Āchārya, first going to the east or north, and then turning to the south. The Āchārya honoured him with the offer of *arghya* and received *dakshiṇā* (fees).

Next comes the most important sacrament in a Hindu's life, *viz.,* that of marriage.

Regarding the proper age of marriage Jīmūtavāhana in his *Dāyabhāga* quotes, with approval, the injunction of Vishṇu and Paiṭhīnasi that dire consequences would follow if a girl is married after puberty, and the statement of Manu that "the nubile age is twelve years for a girl to be married to a man aged thirty, and eight years for one to be espoused by a man aged twenty-four; and the age prescribed for entry into another order is fifty years."[1] Jīmūtavāhana quotes a line[2] from *Vishṇu* Purāṇa (III. 10, 16) to show that the marriageable ages for the bride and bridegroom should be in the ratio of 1 to 3. In his *Saṁbandha-viveka*[3] Bhavadeva quotes, from earlier authorities, a few verses which say that if a girl attained puberty in her father's house her father became guilty of killing an embryo (*bhrūṇa-hatyā*), and the girl was deemed to be a *vṛishalī*; that if any one married such a girl out of greed or infatuation, he became *aśrāddheya* (unworthy of *śrāddha*) and *apāṅkteya* (unfit for sitting in the same line), and was regarded as a *vṛishalī-pati* (husband of a *vṛishalī*); and that if a girl attained

[1] *DB. p.* 21.

[2] *KV.* 427.

[3] Dacca University MS. No. M 27/40/2B (number in valuation list). This is a complete but undated MS. consisting of fols. 1-3, and written in Bengali characters. It begins with the words "*atha Bhavadevīya-Sambandha-vivekaḥ,*" and ends with the colophon "*iti Kāla-vaḍabhī (? Bāla-valabhī) -bhujaṅga-śrī-Bhavadeva-Bhaṭṭa-virachitaḥ Sambandha-vivekaḥ samāptaḥ.*" Though both in the beginning and in the colophon the work is called *Sambandha-viveka,* and its authorship is clearly ascribed to Bhavadeva, the fact that some of the references, made in the later Smṛiti Nibandhas, to Bhavadeva's *Saṁbandha-viveka* are not found in the above mentioned MS., tends to show that our MS. contains only a summary of the original work.

puberty during the time of her marriage, a special *homa* was to be performed before the commencement of the actual rites of marriage.[1] It appears from these prescriptions that people were generally in favour of early marriage of girls, and did not like that men should marry after the age of fifty. It is, however, not known how far these prescriptions were actually followed in practice by the different grades of people.

The *Saṁbandha-viveka* further informs us that in matters of marriage great importance was attached to the *sapiṇḍa, sagotra* and *samāna-pravara* relationship between the bride and the bridegroom. No marriage was permitted in the first four forms (*viz. Brāhma, Daiva, Ārsha* and *Prājāpatya*), if the bride was within the fifth generation on the mother's side of the bridegroom, or within the seventh generation on his father's side, or if the bride and bridegroom were of the same *gotra* (through their fathers or mothers) or of the same *pravara.* In the last four forms (*viz.,* Āsura, Gāndharva, Rākshasa and Paiśācha), however, a bridegroom might marry a bride who was not within the third generation on his mother's side, or the fifth generation on his father's side; but those who contracted such marriages were deemed as degraded to the position of Śūdras. Nor was marriage permissible with one's own maternal uncle's daughter or with the daughter of one's step-brother's maternal uncle; because such a girl was as good as a sister to the bridegroom. Among uterine brothers or sisters, marriage was permitted in order of seniority in age. But if the elder brother became a *sannyāsin,* or was afflicted with a dangerous disease (such as insanity, phthisis etc.), or lived in a distant country, or had a savage temperament, or was guilty of any of the *mahāpātakas,* the younger brother was allowed to supersede him in marriage without incurring any social stigma. If anybody married a girl whose elder uterine sister, though free from any serious defect, remained unmarried, he was to forsake that girl, perform the *Prājāpatya* penance, and maintain her with food and raiments.[2]

Though monogamy was the ideal, and probably also the rule, at least among the members of the Brahmanical fold, people were allowed to have more wives than one;[3] but when a person wanted to have a second wife, he was to gratify the first one with sufficient wealth in order to have her assent.[4] Whatever might be the

[1] See *Saṁbandha-viveka,* fol. 3a.
[2] For similar injunction cf. *PRP.* 117.
[3] King Sāmalavarman had quite a large number of wives (*IB.* 23); Bhavadeva's father had two wives (*IB.* 37).
[4] *DB.* 83.

number of the wives of a person, the first *savarṇā* (of the same caste) wife enjoyed the highest position in social and religious functions (*supra* p. 576).

Of the different forms of marriage the *Brāhma* seems to have been the most popular with the Brāhmaṇas, the last four forms being rare but not quite unknown to them.[1] The procedure of this *Brāhma* form, as followed by the *Sāmavedins*, has been given by Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva in his *Karmānushṭhāna-paddhati*.[2] According to Bhavadeva the marriage rites began with *Jñāti-karman* (or preliminaries done by the bride's blood relations on her father's side) in which the bride's body was besmeared with a mixture of powders of *masūra, yava* and *māsha* by her father's *sapiṇḍa* or *suhṛit*, and she was bathed with water poured on her head and profusely on her lap, with the citation of relevant Vedic *mantras*. Then the guardian *(sampradātā)* of the bride was to receive the bridegroom, honour him with *pādya, arghya, āchamanīya*, scented flowers, clothes, sacred thread, finger-ring *etc*., and intimate his intention of giving his ward in marriage to him. The bridegroom having given his consent, *mukha-chandrikā* followed. A cow was tied on the northern side of the marriage-pandal, and *vishṭaras* (*i.e.* seats made with *kuśa* in a particular manner) and other requisite articles were placed in their proper places. The *sampradātā* stood with his face towards the west, and the bridegroom sat on a seat with his face towards the east. The *sampradātā* then offered to the bridegroom two *vishṭaras*, a vessel containing water *(i.e. pādya)*, *arghya* (consisting of *akshata* and twigs of *durvā* grass — all placed on a dish made of conch-shell or some other material), *āchamanīya (i.e.* water for sipping), and *madhu-parka* (*i.e.* a mixture of *ghee*, curd and honey). The bridegroom duly received all these things, and after sipping water, he besmeared his right palm with auspicious herbs and placed on it the right hand of the bride. Then either a woman, who was fortunate and whose husband and sons were living, or a Brahmin tied these two hands with *kuśa* along with a fruit, after performing certain auspicious rites (according to custom). Next followed the 'giving of the girl to the bridegroom' *(kanyā-sampradāna)* after adorning her properly; the offer of dowries,[3]— a pair of cows, food, water, beds, a maid-servant and five kinds of grains; the tying of the ends of the bride's and bridegroom's clothes by a Brahmin woman whose husband and sons were living, with

[1] Cf. *Saṁbandha-viveka*, fol. 2b; also *DB*. 79, 96.

[2] Fols. 10a-27b.

[3] The dowry of the bridegroom is referred to in the Charyā-padas (*BGD*. 33).

the performance of various auspicious customary rites; the guardian's untying the knot made with *kuśa;* and his removal of the piece of cloth, so that the bride and the bridegroom might see each other's face. The barber, who stood near the marriage-pandal, exclaimed 'a cow, a cow,' and the bridegroom cited a *mantra.* The barber then let loose the cow. Next the bridegroom performed *kuśaṇḍikā* in front of the main house. A friend of the bridegroom covered his body with clothes, took a pitcher full of water collected from a water-reservoir which never dried up, went to the south of the fire by the east, and stood there silently with his face towards the north. Another friend of the bridegroom took a doll in his hand, went in the same way to the south of the fire, and stood there on the east of the former friend. On the western side of the fire, some mixture of fried grains (*lāja*) and *samī*-leaves were to be placed on a winnowing-basket; and near it a flat piece of stone, furnished with a smaller piece (*saputra śilā*), and a mat, made of *vīraṇa*-leaves and surrounded by a piece of cloth (*paṭa-veshṭita*), were placed. The bridegroom then entered the house, made the bride put on two pieces of defectless cloth (the *uttarīya* or upper garment being a substitute for the *yajñopavīta*), painted her forehead with a mark of vermilion, and brought her to the side of the fire. The bride first touched a side of the mat with her right foot and then sat on its eastern part to the south of her husband. She touched the right shoulder of her husband with her right hand; and the bridegroom offered oblations six times into the fire, and then performed the *Mahāvyāhṛiti-homa.* Next came the bride's *śilākrāmaṇa* (*i.e.* the placing of her right foot on a flat piece of stone furnished with a smaller piece), *Lāja-homa* (performance of *homa* with fried grains for a specified number of times), *Agni-pradakshiṇa* (going round the fire with the bridegroom), and *Saptapadī-gamana* (taking seven steps in seven small circles along with the bridegroom). After these functions were over, the bridegroom's friend, who held the pitcher full of water, came forward and bathed the bridegroom and the bride. The bridegroom then muttered six *mantras* after taking the bride's hands into his, came to the fire with the bride, performed the *homas* and gave fees to the priest. The bridegroom next kindled a fire called *Yojaka,* performed *kuśaṇḍikā,* and remained there until the stars were visible (in case the marriage took place in day time). When the stars became visible, he stretched a dry red-furred hide of a bull, seated the bride on the side furnished with fur, performed the *Mahāvyāhṛiti-homa,* and offered oblations of *ghee* six times into the fire. He then showed the *Dhruva* and *Arundhatī* stars to the bride, and the bride saluted the bridegroom. Then in accordance with the local custom, women, who had

their husbands living, placed the bride and the bridegroom on the altar, bathed them with water sanctified with mango-twigs, and performed other auspicious rites. The bridegroom then entered the house, took rice mixed with *ghee* (*havishyānna*) but without salt, and gave the remnants of his food to the bride. For three consecutive nights the newly married couple were to live on food taken without salt, abstain from all kinds of sexual enjoyment, and sleep on the ground on a bed furnished with *kuśa*. The bride was then seated in a cart made of *kiṁśuka*, *śālmalī* or some other wood, and led to the bridegroom's house.[1] On the way, all the cross-ways (*chatushpatha*) were invoked (for allaying the impediments of the journey). When the bridegroom's house was reached, the bride was taken down and led into the house. Brahmin women, whose sons and husbands were living, performed various auspicious popular rites and then seated the bride on a red bull's hide. They placed a beautiful Brahmin boy on her lap and gave a white-lotus-bulb or some fruits in his hand. The bridegroom then kindled a fire named *Dhṛiti*, performed *kuśaṇḍikā* and the *homas*, and made the bride bow down to her father-in-law and others.[2]

On the fourth day from the date of marriage, the *Chaturthī-homa* was performed. The wife took her seat on the southern side of the sacred fire, where a vessel of water furnished with *kuśa* was also placed. The husband offered oblations twenty times into the fire with the mention of the *mantras* of Agni, Vāyu, Chandra and Sūrya—severally and collectively, and each time the ladle, with the remaining *ghee* sticking to it, was dipped into the water. The wife was then taken to the northern side of the fire and bathed with this water.

From the descriptions of the Vedic rites and sacraments given above, it is evident that the contributions of local customs, family traditions, and superstitions, especially of women, to the procedures of these rites and sacraments were not at all negligible. But in this there was nothing peculiar to Bengal. For, in connexion with marriage, the *Āśvalāyana-Gṛihya-sūtra* (1, 7, 1-2) says: "Various indeed are the observances of the (different) countries and villages; and one should follow those in marriages. . . . "; and the *Āpastamba-Gṛihya-sūtra* (2, 15) declares: "People should understand from women (and others) what procedure is (to be observed according to custom)." Various festivities and amusements were held in

[1] Gifts were made to the bride in this bridal procession (*DB*. 80).
[2] Unimportant details have been left out of the account of the marriage ceremony given in the text.

connection with the marriage ceremony, and the procession of the bridegroom to the bride's house was accompanied by music.[1]

Besides the Vedic rites and sacraments mentioned above there were other ceremonies which were regularly performed, and many of them served as occasions of mirth and festivities to the people of Bengal. As typical examples, the worship of Durgā in her different forms, and of Gaṇeśa, Sarasvatī, Indra, Sūrya, Manasā[2] and Kāma or Madana (Cupid), the spring festival *Holākā* (the present *Holi*), the *Sukha-rātri-vrata,* the *Dyūta-pratipad,* the *Pāshāṇa-chaturdaśī, etc.* may be mentioned. Regarding the merry-makings of the people on the occasion of worship of Durgā and her other forms, Sandhyākara Nandī says in his *Rāmacharita* that Varendrī became 'full of festivities on account of the excellent worship of the goddess Umā.'[3] In the autumnal worship of Durgā, a peculiar kind of merry-making, called *śāvarotsava,* was observed by the people on the *Daśamī tithi.*[4] During this merry-making, those taking part in it had to cover their bodies with leaves *etc.* and besmear themselves with mud and other things to resemble the Śavaras. They had to jump and dance at random, sing, and beat drums incoherently. A couple of verses occurring both in the *Kālikā* Purāṇa and the *Kāla-viveka* show that the programme of this *Śāvarotsava* included not only topics on, and songs about, sexual intercourse, but also the requisite movements of the body, and that the violation of this practice incurred the rage and curse of Bhagavatī.[5] The *Bṛihad-dharma* Purāṇa (II, VI, 81-83) introduces certain restrictions in this merry-making, saying :

> "People should not utter before others words which are expressive of the male and female organs, *etc.*; they should utter these during the great worship (of the goddess Durgā) in the month of Āśvina. But (even on that occasion) they should never pronounce (such words) before their mothers or daughters, or those female disciples who have not been initiated to Śakti-worship."

But it supports by arguments, which cannot be reproduced without using indecent language, that "one, who is worthy of

[1] The Charyā-padas refer to various musical instruments which were played when the bridegroom proceeded to the bride's house. These were *paṭaha, mādal, karaṇḍa, kasālā* and *dundubhi* (*BGD.* 33; *DUS.* IV. No. II. 28-29; *JL.* XXX. 41-42).

[2] *KV.* 412, 102, 294, 417, 413.

[3] *RC.* III. 35.

[4] *KV.* 514; also *Kālikā* Purāṇa (Venkaṭeśvara Press ed.) 61, 21-22. For *KV.* cf. *supra* p. 325. Regarding the date and provenance of the present *Kālikā* Purāṇa, cf. Hazra, *ABORI.* XXII. 1-23.

[5] See *KV.* 514; *Kālikā* Purāṇa 61, 21-22. It is difficult to believe that the action hinted by the line '*bhaga-liṅga-kriyābhiś=cha krīḍayeyur=alam janāḥ*' was actually practised by the people on this occasion.

worshipping her, should utter (such expressions) with a view to creating her pleasure."

The use of objectionable expressions was not peculiar to *Durgā-pūjā* only. In the *Kāma-mahotsava* also, the people used such objectionable expressions (*jugupsit-okti*) to the accompaniment of music, because they believed that by such practices Kāma was pleased to confer wealth and progeny on the worshippers.[1] It should be mentioned here that this *Kāma-mahotsava*, or the great festival of the Cupid, was celebrated in the month of Chaitra. The worship of Indra, called *Śakrotthāna*,[2] consisted in erecting a flagstaff dedicated to the god, and the ceremony was attended by kings, citizens, ministers and Brahmans in festive dress. The most important spring festival of the people of the east was the *Holākā*[3] which must have been greatly enjoyed by all people without distinction of caste or sex. In the *Sukha-rātri-vrata* (the vow of a happy night) which was performed in the month of Kārtika, the poor were fed in the evening, and people, whether mutually related or not, were to greet one another with sweet words in the morning following the *Sukha-rātri* (happy night).[4] In the *Pāshāṇa-chaturdaśī*, which was observed in the month of Agrahāyaṇa, big cakes were eaten at night.[5] More interesting was the festival called *Dyūta-pratipad* which was observed on the *śukla-pratipad* in the month of Kārtikā.[6] In this festival the morning was spent in playing dice or gambling, because people believed that success in the game indicated a happy year. They then put on ornaments, smeared their bodies with scents, attended to vocal as well as instrumental music, and dined in the company of intimate friends. At night they decorated their beds and bed-rooms, and enjoyed the company of women they loved. On this occasion, they also gave new clothes to their friends and relatives as well as to Brahmins. In the *Kojāgara* also, which was observed on the full-moon day of Āśvina, the night was passed in playing at dice, and friends and relatives were gratified with food consisting chiefly of pressed rice (called *chipiṭaka*) and preparations of cocoanuts.[7] In the *Bhrātṛi-dvitīyā* which was celebrated in the month of Kārtika, sisters fed their brothers who, in their turn, gave ornaments, clothes, *etc.* to their sisters.[8] There

[1] *KV.* 470. [2] *KV.* 294 ff. [3] *DB.* 43, 127.

[4] *KV.* 403-4. For a more detailed description of this festival, see Śrīnāthāchārya-chuḍāmaṇi's *Kṛitya-tattvārṇava* (Dacca University MS. No. 4630), fols. 70a, 71b.

[5] *KV.* 470.

[6] *Kṛitya-tattvārṇava*, fols. 71b-72b.

[7] *KV.* 408. See also *Kṛitya-tattvārṇava*, fol. 68a-b.

[8] *KV.* 405-6.

are many other rites, ceremonies and festivals, referred to in *Kāla-viveka,* with which we are familiar today, such as *Dīpānvitā,* (illumination of houses) and *Ākāśa-pradīpa* (burning a lamp high in the sky) in the month of Kārtika, *Janmāshṭamī, Akshaya-tritīyā, Aśokāshṭamī, Agastya-arghya,* holy bathing in the Ganges (known as *Daśaharā*) and the Brahmaputra (known as *Ashṭamī-snāna*), bathing on the *Māghī Saptamī* day, *etc.* There are also long lists of food and action forbidden on particular *tithis*; and the proper days for fasting and appropriate time for study, pilgrimage, journey, *etc.* are laid down with punctilious care.[1] Detailed regulations were also laid down for the disposal of dead bodies and a short account of the funeral rites is given in Appendix III. In short, life was subjected to a series of injunctions and prohibitions, controlling even the minutest details of daily life to an extent which it is difficult for us to realise. How far all these were actually observed in practice it is, of course, difficult to say. But a perusal of the Smṛiti literature in Bengal presents a picture of life tightly bound within a narrow framework of Śāstric rules. On the other hand, the rites and festivals mentioned above must have made family and social life highly enjoyable, and afforded opportunities to people to come into close and intimate touch with one another.

VII. LIFE OF THE PEOPLE

Sufficient data are not available for reconstructing a comprehensive picture of the life lived by people in ancient Bengal. All that we can do is to throw some light on its important phases with the help of foreign accounts, sculpture, literature and inscriptions. The literary works of Bengal, which supply most of the particulars, belong to the twelfth century A.D. with the single exception of the *Charyā-padas,*[2] which were probably one or two centuries earlier. On account of the paucity of data no attempt has been made to trace the evolution of social life, according to distinct chronological periods. The sources of information range between the fourth and twelfth century A.D. and the picture drawn in the following pages may be regarded as broadly true of this period.

[1] *KV.* 325, 494-95, 409, 106, 292-93, 400, 422, 418, 333, 265, 278, 351. See also *Kṛitya-tattvārṇava,* fols. 72b-73a.

[2] The meaning of the Charyā-padas (*supra* pp. 383-88) is not always clear. Dr. M. Shahidullah published an article in *Naṭarāja* (a Bengali journal) quoting many passages referred to in this chapter with an indication as to their meaning, and subsequently published the texts with translations (*DUS.* IV. No. II. 1-87). Dr. P. C. Bagchi's interpretation is occasionally different (*JL.* XXX. 1-156).

1. *General nature*

The Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang has recorded a few general observations on the nature of the people in different parts of Bengal visited by him. The people of Samataṭa, according to him, were "hardy by nature," and those of Tāmralipti, both "hardy and brave." The manners of the people of Karṇasuvarṇa were "honest and amiable," but those of Tāmralipti, "quick and hasty." An excessive love of learning and earnest application to it characterised the people of Puṇḍravardhana, Samataṭa and Karṇasuvarṇa.[1] I-tsing's testimony to the high moral standard of the Buddhists of a *vihāra* in Tāmralipti has already been referred to above (*supra* p. 427).

Fondness for learning, to which Hiuen Tsang bears testimony, and which characterises the people of Bengal even today, induced them to visit distant parts of India, even up to Kashmir, for study. But they were not always noted for good behaviour. In his satirical poem *Daśopadeśa,* Kshemendra observes that the students of Gauḍa who came to Kashmir with frail bodies which seemed to break even at the touch of people, soon acquired overbearing manners under the bracing climate of this country, so much so that they refused to pay the shop-keepers and drew out knife at the slightest provocation. This aspect of the Bengali character is also emphasised by the remark of Vijñāneśvara that the people of Gauḍa were quarrelsome.[2] The Brahmanical writers of Bengal always insisted on a high moral standard of the people. They decried all kinds of vices and sensualities, and the killing of Brāhmaṇas, drinking of wine, theft and adultery were regarded as heinous crimes for which the heaviest penalties and expiations were prescribed.[3] At the same time they encouraged the culture of all kinds of virtue such as truth, charity, purity, kindness and continence.

2. *Position of women*

We know from Vātsyāyana's *Kāmasūtra* that the women of Gauḍa had the reputation of being soft and timid, sweet-speaking and graceful.[4] It appears from Dhoyī's descriptions (in *Pavanadūta*)[5] of the women of Vijayapura, the capital city of Lakshmaṇasena, that the Purdah system was not much in vogue. But certain

[1] Beal-*Records*. II. 194-204.
[2] *Mitāksharā*, Nirṇayasāgara edition, p. 257.
[3] This will be evident from *PRP*.
[4] *Kāmasūtra*, VI. 5. 33.
[5] *Supra* pp. 363-64.

remarks of Vātsyāyana indicate that the women of the royal harem of Vaṅga were not accustomed to move out freely, and spoke with outsiders from behind a curtain.[1] Women were educated, and probably many of them were literate.[2] In ancient Bengal, as in the rest of India, a woman had hardly any independent legal or social status, except as a member of the family of her father and husband. It is interesting to note, however, that the great Bengal jurist Jīmūtavāhana asserts the right of a widow to inherit her husband's entire property in the absence of any male issue. Jīmūtavāhana notes the conflicting views on this subject, and refutes in an elaborate argument the opinion of those who held that the brother and other relations of the deceased should have preference over his widow, or that the latter would be entitled only to maintenance. He adds, however, that the widow shall have no right to the sale, mortgage, or gift of the property, and her enjoyment should be consistent with the life of a chaste widow, solely devoted to the memory of her husband. She should live in her husband's family with his parents, abstain from luxury (such as wearing fine clothes), and spend just enough to keep herself alive in order that she might do all acts and rites beneficial to her dead husband. Besides, she had to be fully subservient to her husband's family, even in respect of the disposal of her property. In the absence of any male relation of husband, down to a *sapiṇḍa,* she must live under the guardianship of her father's family.

Women enjoyed few legal rights and privileges even in respect of their person and property, and had to rely mostly upon the natural instinct of love, affection and sense of duty possessed by their husbands, sons and other relatives. The prevalence of polygamy must have made their lives at home somewhat irksome. In spite of strong insistence of physical chastity of women, contemporary evidence indicates that there was a certain amount of laxity in this respect.[3] Mention may, however, be made in this connection of one redeeming feature in society which offers a striking contrast to modern ideas. It is laid down in the *Brahma-vaivarta* Purāṇa[4] that a woman, forcibly ravished against her will, is not degraded or excommunicated thereby, but becomes pure on performing a penance (*prāyaśchitta*).

Married women sometimes helped their husbands by earning money by means of spinning, weaving or some other mechanical

[1] *Kāmasūtra* v. 6. 41.

[2] Love-letters written by women are referred to in *Pavana-dūta* (v. 40).

[3] Cf. *infra* pp. 617-20 and also *Brahma-vaivarta* Purāṇa (Brahma-khaṇḍa x. 166-70).

[4] Prakṛiti-khaṇḍa, LXI. 79.

art.[1] Sometimes employers offered bribes to the wives of labourers in order to induce them to send their husbands or some other members of their families to work.[2] After the death of their husbands, the wives had to live in complete chastity and to avoid all kinds of luxury and exciting food such as meat, fish, *etc.*[3] The position of the widows in society was not at all enviable. They were often looked upon as inauspicious, and were very seldom allowed to take part in the different rites and ceremonies. They seem to have been encouraged by the people to immolate themselves in the funeral pyres of their husbands. The *Bṛihad-dharma* Purāṇa (II. 8. 3-10) says:

"A devoted wife, who follows her husband in death, saves him from great sins. Oh twice-born, there is no greater exploit for women, because (by this) she enjoys in heaven the company of her husband for a *manvantara*. Even when a widow dies by entering into fire with a favourite thing of her husband, who died long ago, and with her mind absorbed in him, she attains the same state (as mentioned above)."

So, it appears that the custom of the burning of *Suttee* came into vogue in Bengal from fairly early times.

3. *Food and drink*

Rice, fish, meat, fruits, vegetables and milk (in various forms) constituted the chief articles of diet. Fish and meat were not usually eaten by Brāhmaṇas outside Bengal, but the practice was so common in Bengal that Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva had to defend it by a lengthy argument. He quotes the opinion of previous authorities like Chhāgaleya, Yājñavalkya, Manu and Vyāsa, and observes:

"All this (prohibition) is meant for the prohibited (days) like Chaturdaśī *etc.* ... so it is understood that there is no crime *(dosha)* in eating fish and meat."[4]

As regards fish the *Bṛihad-dharma* Purāṇa (II. 5. 44-46) recommends that a Brāhmaṇa should eat *rohita, sakula, śaphara* and other fishes which are white and have scales. It was due to this consumption of fish by all classes of people in Bengal, that Śrīnāthāchārya also allowed the people to eat fish and meat except on some *parvan* days enumerated in two verses of the *Vishṇu* Purāṇa which he quoted.[5] Jīmūtavāhana's inclusion of the fat (*taila*) of *illisa*

[1] *DB.* p. 85.
[2] *Ibid.* 105.
[3] *PRP.* 69; *Bṛihad-dharma* Purāṇa, II. 8. 11.
[4] *PRP.* 67-68.
[5] Govindānanda, in his *Varsha-kaumudī* (p. 216) condemns the view of Śrīnāthāchārya.

(Hilsa) fish[1] among the different kinds of vegetable and animal fat tends to show that this fish was largely consumed in Bengal, and the people used its fat for various purposes. But the people, especially the Brahmins, were not allowed to take any kind of fish they liked. They had to avoid those fishes which had ugly forms, or had heads like snakes, or lived in holes.[2] Though people were asked to avoid rotten fish,[3] some of them took dried fish. Sarvānanda says in his *Ṭīkā-sarvasva* that the people of Vaṅgāla were fond of taking dried fish.[4] As regards meat, the flesh of deer[5] and goat was most popular. Among the animals whose flesh was not recommended to the people by the Smṛiti works, were snails, crabs, fowls (both domestic and wild), cranes, ducks, *dātyūha* birds, camels, boars, cows *etc.* Among the five-nailed animals, the hare, the *godhā*, the porcupine and the tortoise might be eaten.[6] But in no case was the taking of raw or dried meat permissible.[7] Among vegetables, mushrooms, onions, garlics *etc.* were always to be avoided.[8] Betels were taken with *karpūra* (camphor).[9]

Milk and its various preparations were very popular items of diet, but Bhavadeva prohibits various kinds of milk, chiefly on hygienic grounds.[10]

As regards intoxicating drink those in common use were spirituous liquor made by distillation of rice, molasses, flour and honey. But there were many other kinds of wine.[11] The early *Charyāpadas* refer to drinking at liquor shops where the Śauṇḍika's wife sold the liquor after fermenting it by means of the fine powder of the root of a tree.[12]

Bhavadeva vehemently disapproves the taking of intoxicating drinks by the people, be they twice-born or not.[13] But to what extent it stopped this evil practice it is difficult to say. The *Bṛihaddharma* Purāṇa (II. 6, 98) says: "In times forbidden by the scriptures, a Brahmin should not worship Śiva with gold, blood, wine, human sacrifice, fish and meat," thus indicating that wine was used by the Tāntric Devī-worshippers.

1 *KV.* 379. 2 *PRP.* 67. 3 *Ibid.* 66.
4 *SPP.* 1326, pp. 86 f.n., 103. 5 *BGD.* 12. 6 *PRP.* 66 ff.
7 *Ibid.* 59. 66. 8 *Ibid.* 65. 9 *BGD.* 44.
10 *PRP.* 66 ff. 11 *Ibid.* 40.
12 *BGD.* 7; *JL.* xxx. 6. According to Dr. Shahidullah's interpretation (*op. cit.* 5) the wine was fermented by a thin bark.
13 *PRP.* 40 ff.

4. *Dress and Ornaments*

Literary evidence indicates that men and women in ancient Bengal generally wore a single piece of cloth as under-garment, and occasionally also an upper garment (*uttarīya* and *oḍṇā*). They also used various ornaments such as ring, ear-ring or ear-pendants (*kuṇḍala*), necklace (*hāra*), armlet (*keyūra*) and bracelet (*valaya*), that made of conch-shell (*śaṅkha-valaya*) being a speciality for women (cf. *infra* pp. 657-58).

A more precise idea of the dresses and ornaments and the mode of wearing them may be formed by a study of the sculptures, chiefly those of Pāhārpur.

Men wore *dhoti* which was generally shorter and narrower than that worn by the Bengalis of the present day (Pl. LVII. 142; LVI. 140). Ordinarily it hardly reached below the knee, and in many cases it was even shorter than that. The cases where the *dhoti* reached up to the ankle may be regarded as exceptional. The usual mode of wearing the *dhoti* was different from the present fashionable mode. The central part of the *dhoti* having covered the lower part of the body below the navel, both the ends of the cloth were drawn in and tucked up behind. It was held tight round the waist by a girdle, consisting of three or more bands, fastened together by means of a knob in the centre, just below the navel. Sometimes only the left end of the *dhoti* was tucked up behind, and the right end was allowed to hang in graceful folds in front. This mode of wearing *dhoti* exposes the contour of the legs as the cloth fits them closely, and the folds are often marked by incisions both vertical and horizontal.

The women also wore *śāḍis* in the same way, though they were much longer and generally reached the ankle. This mode appears, however, to have come into fashion during the Pāla period, for in earlier sculptures at Pāhārpur, the *śāḍis* went round the lower part of the body, one end falling vertically behind the left leg in graceful folds.[1] This resembles the way in which modern Bengali ladies put on *śāḍī* to cover the lower part of the body. In ancient Bengal the *śāḍī*, like the *dhoti*, never covered the upper part of the body which generally remained exposed, though sometimes it was partially covered by a long narrow scarf (*uttarīya* or *oḍṇā*).[2] In addition, in the cases of women, the breast was occasionally covered by a *chauli* or

[1] Cf. Pl. LVI. 140; LVII. 142; LVIII. 144.

[2] The upper scarf of the women was worn in different fashions; Cf. *Pavana-dūta*, v. 35; *Āryā-saptaśatī*, II. 5. 1; Bhatt.-*Cat.* Pl. II, XXV. LXII (*a*).

stanapaṭṭa, and in a few cases by a bodice,[1] which covered the body above the navel and a portion of the upper arm. The *śāḍīs* of the women and even the *dhoti* of the men were embroidered with various designs, composed of lines or floral and ornamental devices of various patterns.

The above may be regarded as the normal dress. There must have been special dresses for special occasions, and Jīmūtavāhana refers to the dress for assemblies.[2] Although we have no definite idea of such a dress, some exceptional modes of dress are represented in the sculptures. Sometimes men dressed in something like shorts or *lengaṭs* which covered only a small portion of the thigh, and women in a close-fitting tunic or *pyjama* reaching up to the ankle.[3] This was undoubtedly the case with the dancing girls who wore in addition a long *oḍṇā,* which was loosely thrown over the shoulder behind the head and passed under the arms so that its ends fluttered during a dance.[4] The scanty *lengṭi*[5] worn by an ascetic as well as by a drummer (?) is curious; so are the short dresses put on by warriors.[6]

The dress and ornaments of the boy Krishṇa in Pāhārpur reliefs[7] probably represent those generally used by the children. The chief points of interest are the three tufts of hair on the crown, called *kāka-paksha* in literature, the torque with medallions round the neck which is in use even today, and the upper scarf tied round the middle of the body between the chest and the abdomen. The lower garment consisted either of a short *dhoti* or shorts.

The ornaments worn by men and women, like their dresses, were very similar. The amorous couple in Pāhārpur relief (Pl. LVI. 140) have each large ear-pendants, two lines of necklaces,[8] armlets, bracelets, elaborate girdles and anklet. These may be regarded as the ornaments generally used. Sometimes a woman puts on too many bracelets like the up-country ladies.[9]

Neither men nor women used any covering for the head, but the sculptures of Pāhārpur show that they elaborately dressed their hair.

[1] Pl. XXVI. 63; cf. also Bhatta.-*Cat.* Pl. XIV.
[2] *DB.* 148.
[3] Pl. XLVIII. 117-118; cf. also *Paharpur.* Pl. XXIX *a, b, d.*
[4] *Ibid.* Pl. XXXIV (*a*).
[5] Pl. L. 122. Cf. also *Paharpur.* Pl. LI (*b*). The Charyā-padas refer to naked Kāpālis. They besmeared their body with ashes, held *khaṭvāṅga* in one hand and *ḍamaru* on the other, wore garlands of bones, *kuṇḍalas* and anklets, and tied a bell on their leg (*BGD.* 19, 21).
[6] Pl. XLVII. 114, 116; XLIX. 119; LIII. 128. Cf. *Paharpur.* Pl. LVII.
[7] *Paharpur. Pl.* XXVIII. XXIX (*a*).
[8] For bead-necklaces, Cf. *Ibid.* Pl. LXII.
[9] *Ibid.* Pl. XXXIV (*a*).

"Men wore their hair long with thick tresses falling on the shoulder, tied a knot on the top and had curls or ringlets on the forehead kept in place by a neat fillet. Women had their hair gathered in a bunch at the back or arranged it fan-wise behind the head."[1]

The ascetics had their braided hair arranged in two piles one above the other.[2]

The literary evidence indicates that men used leather shoes and wooden foot-wears, and carried umbrellas and bamboo-sticks.[3] No figure in Pāhārpur sculptures, except warriors, is, however, represented with any footwear, and it was probably not in common use. It appears, however, that the warriors were also often without shoes.[4] The umbrella is represented in sculptures (Pl. I. 5 ; XVI. 42, LXX. 169).

Married women painted their forehead with a mark of vermilion, a custom that prevails even today. They also reddened their lower lips with vermilion, used saffron as a cosmetic, and painted their feet with lac.[5]

As regards furniture we know little of the different articles in use. The bedstead, mirror, and lock with key are referred to in early *Charyā-padas,*[6] Various kinds of household furniture, made of gold with fine artistic designs, are mentioned in *Rāmacharita* (III. 33-34). Terracotta toys, bedsteads, flower-stands, caskets, and domestic utensils such as bowls, vases and pitchers, of which there are large number of varieties, and earthenware, of all kinds and of various types, are represented in sculptures.[7]

5. *Games and pastimes*

Among the indoor games dice and chess seem to have been very popular. The first was current in India since the earliest Vedic period and formed a part of certain religious ceremonies in Bengal (*v. supra* p. 607). We do not know for certain when the second came into use, but as details of the chess, such as sixty-four squares on a piece of cloth, and the pieces known as *rājā, mantrī, gaja* and *vaḍiā* are referred to in early *Charyā-padas,* the game must have been well-known before the tenth century A.D.[8]

The *Charyā-padas* refer to music, both vocal and instrumental, dancing and theatrical performances. They also mention *vīṇā* (lyre) with thirty-two strings which was constructed and played upon as

[1] *Ibid.* p. 67. Cf. Pls. XLVII—LVIII. [2] *Ibid.* Pl. XXXV (c).
[3] *Karmānushṭhāna-paddhati,* fol. 53a; cf. also *Pitṛi-dayitā,* p. 4.
[4] *Paharpur.* Pl. LVII. [5] *Pavana-dūta,* vv. 40, 42, 43, 44.
[6] *BGD.* 44, 49, 9.
[7] *Paharpur.* Pls. LX, LXI, LXIV. Bhatt-*Cat.* pp. XXXV-XXXVI.
[8] *BGD.* 22.

in modern times.[1] Each region had probably some specialities in these matters, and the *Rāmacharita* (III. 29) refers to various kinds of tabor (*muraja*) 'which were specially practised in Varendrī.' Music and dancing were cultivated as high classes of arts by both men and women, and specially by the public women and *devadāsīs* in temples who strictly followed the directions given in Bharata's *Nāṭyasūtra* and other texts on the subject.[2] There are frequent references in literature[3] and inscriptions[4] to music and dancing, and several representations at Pāhārpur,[5] of men and girls in the dancing posture, and musicians playing upon cymbals, gong, lyre and even earthen pots, and holding drum and lute.

Among outdoor pastimes of women may be mentioned gardening and water-sports.[6] Men favoured wrestling and acrobatics.[7]

6. *Conveyances*

The conveyances in ancient Bengal consisted of bullock cart,[8] horse, carriage,[9] elephants and boats. The bullock cart was used even for bridal procession (*v. supra* p. 605) and its shape did not materially vary from the modern type. Horses, carriages and elephants were obviously meant for the rich and the aristocrat. Commenting on the injunctions of Manu and Vishṇu that clothes, vehicles, *etc.* were not liable to partition, Jīmūtavāhana explains vehicles as "carriages or horses and the like,"[10] indicating that these two were the usual vehicles of the well-to-do classes in Bengal.[11]

Elephants, both as a fighting element and an aristocratic

[1] *BGD.* 30.

[2] According to *Rājataraṅgiṇī* (IV. 422) the dancing and music in the Kārtikeya temple at Puṇḍravardhana, which followed the rules of Bharata, were enjoyed by Jayanta who himself knew the literature on this subject (*Bharatānugam-ālakshya nṛitya-gītādi-śāstravit*).

[3] *RC.* III. 35-37.

[4] Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva's Ins., v. 30 (*IB.* 35, 41).

[5] Pl. LII. 126; Pl. LV. 134, 135. Further, for dancing, Cf. *Paharpur.* Pl. XXXIV(*a*), XXXIX(*c*), XL(*c*), XLIII(*d*); for musical instrument, cf. *ibid.* Pl. LI.

[6] *Pavana-dūta,* vv. 33, 38.

[7] *Paharpur.* Pl. XXVIII(*b*), XLII(*e*).

[8] Cf. *go-rathyā* in the second Grant of Dharmāditya (*supra* p. 41, f.n. 2).

[9] Cf. classical accounts of four-horsed chariots maintained by the king of the Prasioi and the Gangaridai (*supra,* Ch. III).

[10] *DB.* 148.

[11] A caparisoned horse is represented in *Paharpur.* Pl. LIII(*f*).

conveyance, were known in Bengal from a very early period.[1] The Bengali *Charyā-padas* refer to the capture of camels[2] by means of snares. A camel is represented in the Pāhārpur sculptures, and a rare image of a goddess riding a camel has been discovered in N. Bengal.[3]

In a country covered with a network of rivers, boats must have been the principal means of conveyance.[4] The early Bengali *Charyā-padas* frequently refer to boats, including sea-going vessels, and mention their component parts *viz.*, helms and oars, instrument for baling out water, ropes both for towing and fixing it to a wooden post on the land, sails, mast and wheels. For short journeys rafts were used. Ferry-boats were in use, and had to be paid for by means of *cowries*.[5]

7. *Luxury and immorality*

Bengal was primarily a rural country and a beautiful description of its countryside is given in *Rāmacharita*.[6] But even in ancient times there were a number of towns and important commercial centres which were abodes of wealth and luxury (*infra*, p. 644). The description of Rāmāvatī[7] and Vijayapura,[8] the capital cities of the Pālas and Senas, by two contemporary poets, in spite of obvious poetic exaggerations, gives us a vivid picture of the wealthy cities of ancient Bengal. Such towns contained wide roads and symmetrical rows of palatial buildings, towering high and surmounted by golden pitchers on the top. The temples, monasteries, public parks and large tanks, bordered by rockery and tall palm-trees, added to the beauty and amenities of town life.

These towns, as in all ages and countries, were the homes of all shades of peoples; the plain, simple, virtuous and religious, as well

[1] Elephants as a military force in Bengal are referred to in classical accounts of the Gangaridae, and in Indian literature and inscriptions. For literature on elephants written in Bengal cf. *supra* p. 295. For sculptural representations cf. *Paharpur*, Pl. LIII (*a*).

[2] *BGD*. 30. The original text has *karaha* which Dr. Shahidullah translates as camel (*DUS*. IV. No. II. 26). But *karaha* (=*karabha*) may mean a young elephant; cf. also *JL*. XXX. 38.

[3] *Paharpur*. Pl. LIII (*b*). *ASI*. 1930-34, Pt. II, p. 256, Pl. CXXVII (*b*).

[4] Cf. *Raghuvaṁśa*, IV. 36 where the Vaṅgas are referred to as *nau-sādhanodyatān* which indicates the skill of the people in the use of boats for all purposes including war (cf. *supra* p. 279).

[5] *BGD*. 16, 24, 26, 27, 58, 59, 73; *JL*. XXX. 28-30. The use of the wheels (*chakra*) is not quite apparent. For further references to boats and harbours cf. *infra*, p. 659 f.n. 3.

[6] *RC*.[2] III. vv. 5-28. [7] *RC*.[2] III. vv. 29-31. [8] *Pavana-dūta*, vv. 36 ff.

as the vicious and the luxurious. Luxuries were chiefly manifested in fine clothes, jewellery, palatial buildings, costly furniture, and sumptuous feasts. Abundant supply of food, far beyond the needs and even capacity of invited guests, was characteristic of these feasts in ancient, as in modern Bengal.[1]

Wealth, luxury and extravagance are hardly compatible with a strict code of morality. Evidences, both literary and epigraphic, testify to the immorality and sensual excesses in ancient Bengal. An idea of the moral laxity of the fashionable young men and women of Gauḍa may be formed from the vivid description of their amorous activities in *Kāmasūtra* (VI. 49) and *Pavana-dūta* (*v.* 42). The language of Dhoyī seems to imply that these were not merely tolerated but regarded as part of normal social life. The same conclusion follows from the very slight penalty imposed upon a Brāhmaṇa for illicit union with a Śūdra girl to which reference has been made above (*supra*, p. 576). Courtesans were familiar, and presumably not unwelcome, features of city-life, for appreciative references are made to them not only in the *Pavana-dūta* and *Rāma-charita*, but also in official records of the Sena kings.[2] Vātsyāyana's references to the most disgraceful amorous intrigues of the members of the royal harem in Gauḍa and Vaṅga with Brāhmaṇas, officers, slaves and servants,[3] seem to indicate that people outside Bengal held a very low opinion of the moral standard of her aristocratic class. Similarly, Bṛihaspati, describing the manners and customs of the people of different parts of India, remarks that the twice-born people of the east are fish-eaters and their women are notoriously immoral.[4]

The low standard of sexual morality was the cause of, or at least mainly responsible for, the growth of certain evil customs. The first was the general practice of keeping female slaves, referred to by Jīmūtavāhana, and these, as the commentator Maheśvara informs us, mean 'women kept for enjoyment.[5]

[1] *I-tsing*. 40.

[2] Edilpur CP., v. 9 (*IB*. 122, 127), which is repeated in the records of Viśvarūpasena.

[3] *Kāmasūtra*, v. 6. 38, 41.

[4] The verses of Bṛihaspati are quoted in *Smṛiti-chandrikā* of Devaṇabhaṭṭa (Mysore ed.) I. p. 25, and *Vyavahāra-mayūkha* of Bhaṭṭa Nīlakaṇṭha (ed. P. V. Kane), p. 7.

[5] *DB*. 149. The institution of slavery can be traced in Bengal from a very early period. It is referred to in Vātsyāyana's *Kāmasūtra* (v. 6. 38). The slaves were regarded as absolute property of a person and were inherited by his successors. It is laid down in the *DB*. (p. 7) that if there is a single female slave inherited by more than one, she must serve, in turn, the different owners, during specific periods, according to number of shares held by each.

The second was the system of dedicating girls (popularly known as *deva-dāsī*) for service in temples. Whatever might have been the primary nature and object of this very ancient institution in India, there is no doubt of its degradation in Bengal towards the close of the Hindu period. Contemporary records refer in rapturous terms to the personal beauty and charm of the hundred women whom Vijayasena and Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva assigned to the temples erected by them.[1] Dhoyī also refers to such women in a temple erected by the Sena king (Lakshmaṇasena ?) in Suhma.[2] That this practice was in vogue even in earlier periods is indicated by the reference in *Rājataraṅgiṇī* (IV. 421 ff.) to the courtesan Kamalā, who was a dancing girl in a temple in Puṇḍravardhana in the eighth century A.D. These girls were well versed in dance and music, and sometimes in other arts, and though dedicated to the service of gods, or associated with ceremonies in temples, were often no better than common courtesans.[3] The long and detailed account of the very rich and accomplished courtesan Kamalā throws an interesting light on the lives of the higher classes of these women and the moral standard of society in those days.

It may be suggested that this low standard of sexual morality was an inevitable consequence of the Tāntric doctrines and the religious tenets and practices of the last phase of both Brahmanical and Buddhist religions in the eleventh and twelfth centuries A.D., to which reference has been made above (*supra*, pp. 329-30). Whether these were the effects or causes of laxity in sexual morality in society it is difficult to say with any degree of certainty, but perhaps each reacted on the other. Certain it is that the literature of the Sena period and the religious texts and practices of the later phases of both Hinduism and Buddhism occasionally betray a degradation in ideas of decency and sexual morality which could not but seri-

[1] Deopārā Ins., v. 30 (*IB.* 49, 55). Bhavadeva's Ins., v. 30 (*IB.* 35, 41).

[2] *Pavana-dūta*, v. 28. The '*deva-vāra-vanitā*' of Rāmāvatī, capital of Rāmapāla, mentioned in the *Rāmacharita* (III. 37) probably also refers to *Deva-dāsīs*.

[3] Nothing more strikingly illustrates the very low standard of sexual morality of the time than the description of these courtesans. Dhoyī calls them *vāra-rāmāḥ*, but does not hesitate to add that they made one feel as if the goddess Lakshmī had come down on earth (to attend her lord, the god Murāri). According to the Ins. of Bhavadeva, 'the hundred damsels (given to Vishṇu) restored to life, as it were, the god of love ... and were the prison-houses of the passionate, and the meeting-hall of Music, Dalliance and Beauty." These leave no doubt that the sensual dominated the religious aspect of the institution of *Deva-dāsīs*.

ously affect the healthy development of moral and social life.[1] It is obviously a dangerous ground to tread upon, in view of the religious susceptibilities of our people, but it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that religious influences were responsible to a large extent for the two great evils which were sapping the strength and vitality of society: the disintegrating and pernicious system of rigid caste-divisions with its elaborate code of purity and untouchability; and the low standard of morality that governed the relations between men and women.

VIII. A NATION IN THE MAKING

The Bengalis of to-day, numbering over sixty millions, are fully conscious and even proud of their distinct entity among the peoples of India. But apart from geographical contiguity, this consciousness is now based upon linguistic rather than social or racial affinity. The feeling of nationality, based on a common language, is, however of recent growth, and could not have developed much in pre-Muslim period when the modern vernaculars had not yet taken shape, and were in the unformed and almost fluid state. The Vernacular literature, as we have seen above, was then in its infancy, and "without a literature there cannot be the pride in a language which is needed to make it one of the bases of nationalism in the modern sense of the term."[2] The facts known so far do not encourage the belief that there was enough social solidarity or cultural homogeneity to foster a feeling of national unity in ancient Bengal. Socially and culturally India, both in ancient and mediaeval period, was divided horizontally rather than vertically, and a Brahman of Bengal felt and consciously maintained greater affinity with a Brahman of Upper India than with a member of lower caste in his own province. Besides, social solidarity was rendered diffi-

[1] The following remarks of Dr. R. L. Mitra about a certain Tantric text, though perhaps not quite accurate or just, are very relevant to this question. "The professed object is devotion of the highest kind, but in working it out, theories are indulged in and practices enjoined which are at once the most revolting and horrible that human depravity could think of. The work is reckoned to be the sacred scripture of millions of intelligent beings." (*Nepalese Buddhist Literature,* p. 261). In spite of all that can be reasonably said in extenuation of Tāntric literature and practices (*v. supra* pp. 329-30), its degrading effect on society can hardly be doubted. Even in important and widely popular Hindu religious festivals such as Durgotsava, Kāma-mahotsava, *etc.* (*supra* pp. 606-07) the sacred texts emphasise certain features which cannot be uttered or written without violating rules of decency according to modern ideas.

[2] Dr. S. K. Chatterji in *New Review,* 1937, p. 546.

cult, if not impossible, by the evolution of the elaborate structure of caste, which made a permanent cleavage between the Brahmans and the remaining elements of people, almost all of which were degraded to the level of Śūdras. Even the latter were divided into numerous isolated and rigid groups by the creation of innumerable castes and sub-castes to which detailed reference has been made above.

There remained, therefore, only two elements which might constitute a nation in Bengal, *viz.* racial and geographical unity. As regards the first, we have already seen above that the main bulk of the people formed a homogeneous ethnic group. To what extent a full realisation of this was prevented by the social divisions we cannot say, but herein undoubtedly lay an important basis for a truly national feeling.

The geographical unity of Bengal, too, was not evidently fully realised in ancient times. No common name for the whole province was evolved,[1] although the number of old regional names was gradually being reduced. Even up to the very end of the Hindu rule, Gauḍa and Vaṅga denoted not only two distinct geographical divisions but, to a certain extent, also two political entities.

The absence of a common designation for the country or the people as a whole seems to show that in spite of the political unity, for a long period under the Pālas, and for shorter periods under other dynasties, a united Bengali nation, as we understand it, had not yet probably come into existence, and there was a broad demarcation between Eastern and Western Bengal, traces of which persist even to-day.

But both the Gauḍas and the Vaṅgas had attained a definite status, and references in inscriptions and literature of other parts of India leave no doubt that they were recognised as two distinguished and important political units. Proud of their past history and achievements, and flourishing in a compact territory with well defined areas, they had each developed a national life which has left its impress even upon posterity. But signs were not wanting that these two component parts would, at no distant date, be welded together into a united nation.

The geographical contiguity, the community of language, and political unity were the forces at work which were destined to bring Gauḍa and Vaṅga closer together, and ultimately evolve a national life among the people living in the region now known as Bengal.

[1] For the origin of the common name Vaṅgāla (from which are derived the modern *Vāṅglā*, *Vāṅgālī*, and European *Bengala*, *Bengal*, *Bengali*), see *supra* p. 19 and *IHQ*. XVI. 225 ff.

In the domain of art and literature they had already developed a common trait which characterised them as distinct from the rest of India, and this may be regarded as the beginning of that cultural unity which helped the growth of a national feeling. There were many other common elements in the culture and civilisation of Gauḍa and Vaṅga in the tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries which differentiated them from the rest of India, and imparted a distinct individuality to the Bengalis. Reference may be made, for example, to the evolution of Proto-Bengali dialect and alphabet, the special preference for the goddesses representing female energy culminating in the worship of Durgā as a national festival, the growth of Tāntrism, the absence of any head-dress, the use of fish and meat as articles of food, and lastly, the peculiar laws of inheritance codified by Jīmūtavāhana which differed in essential respects from those in force in other parts of India. These characteristics were sure to stamp the Bengalis as a separate entity among the Indian peoples.

To sum up, so far as available evidence goes, we cannot say that there was a united Bengali nation by the end of the 12th century A.D., but everything indicates that such a nation was in the making.

APPENDIX I.

THE KULAJI OR GENEALOGICAL LITERATURE

I. THE KULAJI TEXTS

There is an extensive literature in Bengal known as *Kulaji* or *Kula-śāstra*. It deals with the history of the Brāhmaṇas and some other principal castes in Bengal in a general way, and also gives a detailed genealogical account of the notable families belonging to the different castes. We are not concerned here with the latter, except in so far as it throws light on the former, and shall confine our discussion to the general account of the different castes preserved in the *Kulajis*. As might be expected, the *Kulajis*, treating of the Brāhmaṇas, form the major and more important part of this literature, and the rest, so far at least as the general history is concerned, forms an insignificant and almost a subsidiary part.

Certain preliminary remarks on the available *Kulaji* texts are necessary in order to estimate their value and historical importance. The more well-known Brāhmaṇa *Kulaji* texts are :—

√1. *Mahāvaṁśāvalī* or *Miśra-grantha* by Dhruvānanda Miśra.
2. *Goshṭhi-kathā* by Nulo Pañchānana.
3. *Kularāma* by Vāchaspati Miśra.
4. *Vārendra-kula-pañjikā*, a general name for a number of heterogeneous texts.
5. *Mela-paryāya-gaṇanā*.
6. *Kula-pradīpa* by Dhanañjaya.
7. *Kula-dīpikā* by Rāmānanda Śarmā.
8. *Kula-chandrikā*.
9. *Sāgara-prakāśa*.
10. *Kulārṇava*.
11. *Nirdosha-kula-pañjikā* by Maheśa.
12. *Kārikā* by Hari Miśra.
13. *Kārikā* by Eḍu Miśra.
14. *Kula-tattvārṇava* by Sarvānanda Miśra.

Among these No. 1 is printed, and there are good grounds to refer its composition to the latter part of the fifteenth century A.D. The authors of Nos. 2 and 3 were certainly later, and have generally been assumed to be junior contemporaries of Dhruvānanda, the

author of No. 1, though there is no definite evidence in support of it. They may, therefore, be referred to the 16th or 17th century A.D.

Genuine manuscripts of texts Nos. 4 to 10 are difficult to obtain. Modern authors have quoted from these books without giving any account of the manuscripts used by them. No definite idea of their age can be formed and the authorship of some of them is in dispute. The author of No. 11 is said to be a contemporary of Lakshmaṇasena, but there is nothing to support this view, and to judge from the MS. of the work in the Dacca University Library, it cannot be regarded as a very old work.

No texts of Nos. 12, 13 and 14 were known until recent times. N. Vasu, who possessed the only known copies of Nos. 12 and 13, and used the former as the main authority in his voluminous work *Vaṅger Jātīya Ithihāsa* ("Social History of Bengal"), proclaimed No. 13 to belong to the twelfth century A.D., and regarded No. 12 as next in date, but the most authentic genealogical work composed in the thirteenth century A.D. The manuscripts of both were, however, very carefully guarded by him, and in spite of repeated demands, both private and public, were never produced for inspection by scholars. The manuscript of No. 12, however, was found along with others purchased by the Dacca University after his death, and even a casual inspection is enough to convince anybody that it has no claim to be regarded as either an ancient text or a work of Hari Miśra.[1] The foundation on which the huge superstructure of social history was constructed by N. Vasu has thus been considerably weakened, if not totally shattered.

No. 14 is printed, but no definite account is given of the manuscript on which it is based. There are very good grounds for the general belief that the book is a modern compilation, palmed on to an ancient author, with a view to improving the status of certain classes of Brāhmaṇas. Definite instances are known of deliberate interpolation, omission and distortion of passages in *Kulaji* texts in order to remove the social stigma of some families or provide others with a superior status. Indeed these motives are naturally so strong in human beings, and in the absence of old genuine MSS. or printed *Kulaji* texts, the means of achieving the ends comparatively is so easy, that there is nothing to be surprised at the fabrication of new texts and tampering with the old ones.

The facts stated above lead to the following general conclusions:

1. That there are no genuine and authentic *Kulaji* texts that can be dated before the latter half of the fifteenth century A.D.

[1] This has been fully discussed by Dr. R. C. Majumdar (*Bhāratavarsha, Jyaishṭha*, 1348 B.S., p. 698).

2. That with one or two exceptions, the literature exists only in manuscripts, copies of which are difficult to secure.
2. That *Kulaji* texts have been tampered with in various ways, and there are good grounds to doubt the genuineness of many current texts which are attributed to ancient authors.

II. King Ādiśūra and Origin of Bengali Brāhmaṇas and Kāyasthas.

There is one central theme in almost all the *Kulajis* which forms the pivot round which moves their entire conception of the social history of Bengal. It touches upon the origin of the Rāḍhīya and Vārendra Brāhmaṇas who form the bulk of the Brahmin community in Bengal. All the *Kulaji* texts maintain that they were descended from five Brāhmaṇas who came to Bengal at the invitation of king Ādiśūra. The outline of the story is given below.

King Ādiśūra of Bengal requested the king of Kanauj (or Kolāñcha) to send him five Brāhmaṇas, versed in the Vedas and Vedic sacrifices, for there were no such Brāhmaṇas in Bengal. As the latter refused, Ādiśūra declared war against him. To win an easy victory he decided to send to the battle seven hundred Brāhmaṇas of Bengal, seated on bulls, for an orthodox Brāhmaṇa, like the king of Kanauj, full of devotion to cows and Brāhmaṇas, would not kill them. The Brāhmaṇas of Bengal at first refused to ride on bulls as it violated the injunctions of the *Śāstras*. But Ādiśūra promised to free them from guilt when they returned from their expedition. As expected, the king of Kanauj desisted from fighting these Brāhmaṇa soldiers, and sent the five Brāhmaṇas asked for by Ādiśūra. These five Brāhmaṇas, equipped with bows and arrows, came on horseback to Bengal, accompanied by five attendants. Ādiśūra did not show proper respect to them on account of their military dress, whereupon the Brāhmaṇas threw the flower and herbs, with which they wanted to bless Ādiśūra, on a stump of wood, which immediately blossomed into a living tree. Ādiśūra, deeply impressed by this, begged for their pardon and gave them a proper reception. The Brāhmaṇas performed a sacrifice and returned to Kanauj. But their kinsmen at home treated them as degraded on account of journey to Bengal, and asked them to perform penances. Thereupon the five Brāhmaṇas, with their wives and servants, returned to Bengal, and Ādiśūra granted them five villages to live in.

Such is the story in brief outline, but the details vary in the

different *kulajis*. As regards Ādiśūra, different genealogies of his family are given in different texts; he is referred to as the grandfather (mother's father) of Vallālasena in some, and that of a remote ancestor of Vallālasena in others. He is said to be the ruler of Bengal and Orissa, but some authorities add Aṅga, Kaliṅga, Karṇāṭa, Kerala, Kāmarūpa, Saurāshṭra, Magadha, Mālava and Gurjara to his dominions. Some say that the whole affair was peaceful, as Ādiśūra had married the daughter of the Kanauj king, while according to others he fought with him; and his capital, where he received the Brāhmaṇas, is placed by some at Gauḍa, and by others at Vikramapura. The reasons why the five Brāhmaṇas were brought by him are variously stated. Six different authorities put forward names of different religious ceremonies for the performance of which the Brāhmaṇas were requisitioned. According to a seventh account, the king of Kāsī (not Kanauj, as we have in the other texts), being asked by Ādiśūra to pay tribute refused to do so, and in reply tauntingly referred to Ādiśūra's dominions as bereft of Brāhmaṇas and Vedic sacrifices, whereupon Ādiśūra defeated him in a battle and brought the five Brāhmaṇas. The date of this event is also variously put down as Śaka 654, 675, 804, 854, 864, 914, 954, 994 and 999, while three sets of names are given as those of the five Brāhmaṇas.

III. Division of the Brāhmaṇas into Different Sects

The seven hundred Brāhmaṇas who went to fight for Ādiśūra came to be known as Saptaśatī or Sātśatī. According to some they were descendants of Brāhmaṇas living on the bank of the Sarasvatī river, who were brought to Bengal by the Andhra king Śūdraka for performing a sacrifice, and settled in this country which till then had no Brāhmaṇas. According to others, these were people of low castes, but were recognised as Brāhmaṇas by Ādiśūra as a reward for their services. According to a third version, Vallālasena got a boon from the goddess Chaṇḍī that within two *praharas* (six hours) he could make anybody he liked to be a Brāhmaṇa, and the king thereupon created seven hundred Brāhmaṇas who came to be known as Saptaśatī (seven hundred).

Some genealogical texts hold that all the Brāhmaṇas in Bengal, other than the Saptaśatī, were descended from the five Brāhmaṇas, brought by king Ādiśūra, and according to *Nirdosha-kula-pañjikā*, the five sons of one of the five Brāhmaṇas were the progenitors of

Rāḍhīya, Vārendra, and Vaidika Pāśchātya and Dākshiṇātya sections of Bengal Brāhmaṇas. Other texts, however, give different accounts of the origin of these sections and we may next proceed to consider them.

1. *Rāḍhīya and Vārendra*

There is a general agreement among the *Kulajis* that all the Rāḍhīya and Vārendra Brāhmaṇas were descended from the five Brāhmaṇas brought by Ādiśūra. But there are two main versions of the events that led to their division into these two sections.

According to the version current among the Rāḍhīyas, the descendants of the five Brāhmaṇas, settled in Bengal by Ādiśūra, moved in course of time to various parts, either on account of internal dissensions or under royal orders. Ultimately they were definitely classified by Vallālasena into Rāḍhīya or Vārendra according as they lived in Rāḍhā or Varendra at that time.

The version of the Vārendra Brāhmaṇas is quite different. Ādiśūra, we are told, thought that if the Saptaśatī Brāhmaṇas of Rāḍhā gave their daughters in marriage to the five Brāhmaṇas settled in Gauḍa, the latter would have no inducement to return to Kanauj. The Saptaśatīs, under royal command, married their daughters to these Brāhmaṇas who thereupon lived in Rāḍhā. When they died, their sons (by previous marriages), who were still in Kanauj, performed their *Śrāddha* ceremony, but the other Brāhmaṇas refused to take part in it. Humiliated at this they came to Ādiśūra with their family. Not liking to live with their step-brothers in Rāḍhā they settled in Varendra, and came to be known as Vārendra, while the former were called Rāḍhīya.

2. *Vaidika Brāhmaṇas*

Though small in number, the Vaidika Brāhmaṇas occupy an important position in Bengal, as the spiritual leaders (*guru*) of many Rāḍhīya and Vārendra Brāhmaṇa families belong to this section.

The Vaidika Brāhmaṇas are divided into two classes, Dākshiṇātya and Pāśchātya. It is said that on account of Muhammadan invasions, the study of Vedas declined in Northern India, but continued to flourish in the South. Hence some Brāhmaṇas versed in the Vedas came from the South and were welcomed by the Brāhmaṇas of Bengal. They settled here and came to be known as Dākshiṇātya Vaidika.

The origin of the Pāśchātya Vaidika Brāhmaṇas is described as follows in their *Kulajis*: Śyāmalavarman, king of Gauḍa, married the daughter of the king of Kānyakubja (or Kāśī, according to some version), and being desirous of performing some Vedic rites brought five Brāhmaṇas from his father-in-law's dominions, as there was no Veda-knowing Brāhmaṇa in Bengal. After the performance of the rites, these Brāhmaṇas were granted villages and settled in Bengal.

Nobody can fail to detect in the above the chief elements in the Ādiśūra story, and the parallelism extends even to the wide diversity of details in respect of each element. Thus we have different ancestries of Śyāmalavarman, different reasons for bringing the Brāhmaṇas from Kanauj or Kāśī, different names of the original Brāhmaṇas, the miracle of dead tree coming to life in similar circumstances, and lastly, the humiliation of the Brāhmaṇas on their return to Kanauj (or Kāśī) as the cause of their return and final settlement in Bengal. To make matters worse, opinions differ in this case even as to the number of the Brāhmaṇas who originally came to Bengal. On the other hand, there is a fair agreement about the date of the event, *viz.*, 1001 *Śaka* (=1079 A.D.) which enables us to identify the king in question with Sāmalavarman (*v. supra* p. 203).

It may be mentioned here that a different account of the origin of the Vaidika Brāhmaṇas, alleged to be written in 1582 Śaka (=1660 A.D.) by one Rāghavendra, has been quoted by N. Vasu. According to this the Vaidika Brāhmaṇas were originally settled on the Sarasvatī river. Having learnt by astrological calculations of the impending invasions by the Yavanas, they dispersed in different directions, and one Gaṅgāgati came to Bengal and settled in Koṭālipāḍā. His patron was king Harivarman. Other Vaidika Brāhmaṇas followed Gaṅgāgati to Bengal and thus grew the Vaidika community.

3. *Śākadvīpī Brāhmaṇas*

There is a class of Brāhmaṇas in Bengal known as Graha-vipra, who are said to have migrated from Śākadvīpa. There are two sections among them known as Rāḍhīya and Nadīyā Vaṅga Samāja.

According to *Śākala-dvīpikā*, a *Kulaji* of the Rāḍhīya class, as quoted by N. Vasu, there were eight sages in Śākadvīpa whose descendants made a special study of the planets (*graha*) and were known as Graha-vipra. The mythical bird Garuḍa brought eight of them to India who settled in Madhyadeśa. Ten descendants of

these eight came to Gauḍa and were known as Gauḍīya Graha-vipra. Judging from the number of generations mentioned in the *Kulajis*, the migration into Bengal appears to have taken place not more than five centuries ago.

According to *Kulajis* of Nadīyā Vaṅga Samāja, twelve Brāhmaṇas living on the bank of the Sarayū river were brought by king Śaśāṅka to Gauḍa in order to cure himself of a disease by offering sacrifices to the planets (*graha-yajña*). At the request of the king they settled in Gauḍa and were known as Graha-vipra. They were settled in Rāḍhā and Vaṅga and were divided into several sections according to their places of residence.

The *Kulajis* of the Vārendra Śākadvīpī Brāhmaṇas repeat the above account. It is probable, therefore, that the Vārendra and the Nadīyā Brāhmaṇas of the Graha-vipra class had a common origin.

IV. Kulīnism

According to the Rāḍhīya *Kulajis*, the descendants of the five Brāhmaṇas brought by Ādiśūra numbered fifty-nine during the reign of his grandson Kshitiśūra. To each of them this king gave a village for residence, and hence originated the *gāṁi* of the Rāḍhīya Brāhmaṇas. In other words, each Brāhmaṇa and his descendants were known by the name of the village in which they lived—which became their *gāṁi* (belonging to a village) and later developed into surname. For example, the residents of Mukhaṭi village had Mukhaṭi *gāṁi*, and had the surname *Mukhaṭi* or *Mukh-opādhyāya*, by the addition of Upādhyāya (teacher) to the village name. The other well-known titles *Bandy-opādhyāya* and *Chaṭṭ-opādhyāya* originated in the same way. The Vārendra Brāhmaṇas also had one hundred *gāṁis*. As usual, the *Kulajis* differ about the number of these *gāṁis* and their names. A list of all the *gāṁis* is given in App. II. King Dharāśūra, the son of Kshitiśūra, made further innovation by dividing the Rāḍhīya Brāhmaṇas of fifty-nine *gāṁis* into three grades, *viz*. Mukhya-kulīna, Gauṇa-kulīna and Śrotriya.

The Vārendra *Kulajis*, on the other hand, regard Vallālasena as the founder of Kulīnism. According to Vāchaspati Miśra the king laid down nine virtues as the criterion, and assigned the rank of Kulīna to those Brāhmaṇas who possessed all of them. Those who possessed eight or seven of them were called respectively Siddha-śrotriya and Sādhya-śrotriya, and the remaining Brāhmaṇas were called Kashṭa-śrotriya.

There is, however, nothing in older *Kulajis* to indicate that Kulīnism was based on such a test. Various silly stories are told

about the motive of Vallālasena in creating the Kulīnas, and the rough and ready method he adopted in selecting them. The *Kulajis* are, however, unanimous—rather a rare thing—that the rank of Kulīna was personal and the distinction was conferred on only 16 (or 19). Besides, Vallāla placed all these Kulīnas in the same grade and they could marry daughters of non-Kulīnas. It was Lakshmaṇasena who deviated from both these practices, and made the system a complex one, by introducing, among the Rāḍhīya Brāhmaṇas, restrictions of marriage and classification of the Kulīnas into different grades according to their faithful observance of the marriage rules. This process of periodical classification is known as *samīkaraṇa,* the first two of which are said to have taken place during the reign of Lakshmaṇasena, and the next four in that of Danujamādhava (*v. supra* pp. 254-55). Dhruvānanda refers to 117 *samīkaraṇas* up to his time. Abstruse philosophical ideas were also introduced into the system of Kulīnism during the reign of Lakshmaṇasena. But there was still one saving grace. Kulīnism had not yet become a hereditary rank.

V. General Conclusion

King Ādiśūra is the pivot round which the genealogical accounts move. No positive evidence has yet been obtained of his existence, but we have undoubted references to a Śūra family ruling in Western Bengal in the eleventh century (*v. supra* pp. 139,157, 210). Ādiśūra may or may not be an historical person, but it is wrong to assert dogmatically that he was a myth, and to reject the whole testimony of the *Kulajis* on that ground alone.

On the other hand, if we consider the date and the unreliable nature of the modern *Kulaji* texts, we can hardly accept their accounts as historical without corroborative evidence. Such evidence is available in respect of the existence of *gāṁi*[1] as well as of the broad divisions of the Brāhmaṇas into Rāḍhīyas and Vārendras,[2]

[1] The existence of *gāṁi* does not necessarily mean a corroboration of the *Kulaji* story, as a whole, about its origin. The fact that Saptaśatī Brāhmaṇas have also their *gāṁi* goes against the assumption in the *Kulajis* that the system originated with the grant of villages to the five Brāhmaṇas and their descendants. That the details of this *gāṁi* system as given in the *Kulajis* have been proved to be wrong in specific instances will be shown later. For a detailed account of the *gāṁis* see App. II.

[2] Epigraphic evidence shows that these Brāhmaṇas also settled in Vaṅga outside the limits of Rāḍhā and Varendra even during the Hindu period (*EI.* XVII. 356).

and possibly also Vaidikas and Graha-vipras, in the Hindu period, as already noted above. Further, in several instances,[1] the genealogies of particular families as given in the *Kulajis* seem to be corroborated by literary and epigraphic evidence.

As against all these there is a volume of evidence of both positive and negative character, which discredits the story of the *Kulajis*. The accounts of the two great Brāhmaṇa families mentioned in the Bādāl Pillar inscription (*supra* p. 116) and that of Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva (*supra* p. 202) prove the existence of Brāhmaṇas in Bengal in the eighth, ninth and tenth centuries A.D. who, according to the *Kulajis*, must have been descended from the Brāhmaṇas brought by Ādiśūra. This becomes impossible if Ādiśūra lived in the eleventh century A.D., as is rendered probable both by the dates supplied by most of the *Kulajis* and the fact that all the epigraphic evidences refer the royal Śūra family in Bengal to that century. On the other hand, if Ādiśūra lived at the beginning of the eighth century A.D., the earliest date assigned to him in the *Kulajis*, it is not a little surprising that the two families are not mentioned in the *Kulajis*, though the founder of one of them could not have been removed by more than one or two generations from the five

[1] According to *Kulajis*, Nārāyaṇa, grandson of Chhāndaḍa (Ś. 654) of Vātsya *gotra*, flourished in Rāḍhā in the latter half of the eighth century A.D. (*VJI.* 142). An inscription from Orissa relates that Govindaśarman, son of Bhaṭṭa-Nārāyana of the Vātsya *gotra*, an emigrant from Uttara-Rāḍhā, received grant of land in (Gaṅga Era) 308 = *c.* A.D. 808 (*EI.* XXIII 74). One may be inclined to identify Nārāyaṇa of the *Kulajis* with Nārāyaṇa of the inscription.

The *Kulajis* mention the name of Atihara of the Vandyaghaṭīya *gāñi*, who was a contemporary of Vallālasena (*VJI.* 40). Sarvānanda, who wrote *Ṭīkā-sarvasva* in 1159 A.D., states that his father was Ārtihara of Vandyaghaṭī. It is very likely that Atihara is identical with Ārtihara of the *Ṭīkā-sarvasva*.

The *Kulajis* further relate that Atihara's father was Pitho, and his grandfather was Aniruddha. His brother Dharmāṁśu's sons were Devala, Vāmana, and Kuvera, who were contemporaries of Lakshmaṇasena. All of them belonged to the Śāṇḍilya *gotra*. The donee of the Śaktipur Grant of Lakshmaṇasena is Kuvera of the Śāṇḍilya *gotra*, whose father was Ananta, grandfather was Prithvidhara, and great-grandfather was Aniruddha (*EI.* XXI. 215). Kuvera of the *Kulajis* may be identified with Kuvera of the inscription, if we regard Dharmāṁśu as the second name of Ananta, and Pitho, a contracted form of Prithvidhara.

Govardhanāchārya, the author of the *Āryā-saptaśati*, flourished in the court of the Senas (v. 39). His father was Nīlāmbara and his brother was Balabhadra. It is known from the *Kulajis* that Utsāha's sons Govardhanāchārya and Bala were contemporaries of Lakshmaṇasena. (*VJI.* I. 142, 154). Paṇḍit Lāl Mohan Vidyānidhi in his *Saṁbandha-nirṇaya* (p. 504) takes Nīlāmbara as the other name of Utsāha. He does not, however, give the source of this information. It may be argued that Govardhanāchārya of the *Āryā-saptaśati* is identical with Govardhanāchārya of the *Kulajis*.

Brāhmaṇas of Kanauj, or that these families do not refer to their exalted Kanauj origin. That the account of the origin of certain *gāṁis*, as given in the *Kulajis*, is incompatible with what the author of *Chhāndoga-pariśishṭa-prakāśa* says of his own family, has been admitted by N. Vasu himself, the great champion of *Kulajis*. Rai Bahadur R. P. Chanda has demonstrated that the *Kulaji* account of the Vārendra Brāhmaṇas and the origin of the Karañja-*gāṁi* was unknown up to the end of the fifteenth century A.D.[1] Besides, although we have references to a large number of Brāhmaṇas in the Sena land-grants of the period after Vallālasena, not one of them has been referred to as Kulīna. If the rank were really bestowed in consideration of personal merits on a very few, it is not a little surprising that eminent Brāhmaṇas like Aniruddha Bhaṭṭa, Vallāla's own *guru*, and Halāyudha, (and also Bhavadeva, his grandfather, and Kedāramiśra, assuming that Kulīnism was introduced in the ninth century by Ādiśūra's great-grandson). were not thought fit for an honour which was only reserved for persons whose names are not known outside the pages of the *Kulajis*.

But the most potent argument against the *Kulaji* story is that it involves the absurd assumption that while the descendants of five Brāhmaṇas multiplied to millions in course of less than thousand years, the large number of Brāhmaṇas, originally settled in Bengal before the 8th century A.D., and the hosts of immigrants to whom referenre is made in inscriptions (*supra* p. 579) practically vanished from the soil without leaving any trace.

While, therefore, we may freely admit that the *Kulajis* contain a kernel of historical truth about the social condition of the Brāhmaṇas in the closing centuries of the Hindu period, their story with all its details can by no means be regarded as of any historical value. The close similarity in the general theme, *viz.* the origin of different classes of Brāhmaṇas from one or more individuals imported from outside by a king, bears on it the stamp of popular fancy, which is evident also in many other details.

The same conclusion may be drawn from the *Kulaji* accounts of the Vaidyas, Kāyasthas and other castes which belong to the same type as those of the Brāhmaṇas and cannot certainly be regarded as of greater historical value. Two of the well-known *Kulajis* of the Vaidyas, *viz. Kavi-kaṇṭhahāra* by Rāmakānta and *Chandraprabhā* by Bharata Mallika are dated respectively in 1653 and 1675 A.D. No authentic *Kulaji* of the other castes of a prior date is known. The Vaidya *Kulajis* claim Ādiśūra and Vallālasena to be Vaidyas. This view is supported by some Brāhmaṇa *Kulajis*, but opposed by

[1] *Indo-Aryan Races*, pp. 173-75.

those of the Kāyasthas. The general view in all the *Kulajis* is that the five attendants of the five Brāhmaṇas brought by Ādiśūra were the progenitors of the high-class Kāyasthas in Bengal. The Vaidyas and Kāyasthas (and some other castes) have also similar stories of the origin of Kulīnism among them. How far these can be regarded as historical may be gathered from what has been said above about the *Kulajis* in general and the origin of the Vaidyas and Kāyasthas in particular.

A consideration of all the available facts leads to the conclusion that the *Kulaji* story owes its origin to an attempt in the fifteenth or sixteenth century A.D. to trace the beginnings of the social divisions which existed at that time to the early period to which the Hindus naturally looked back as their golden age. The attempt was a sign as well as a symptom of the national reawakening that we notice in other spheres of life among the Hindus in the fifteenth century, and may be compared, and regarded as a supplement, to the work of Raghunandana in respect of social usages, manners and customs.

The very poor knowledge that the Bengalis of the 15th and 16th centuries possessed about the political history of their country in pre-Muhammadan times[1] does not encourage the belief that they had any correct idea of the social history of the same period. Of course, some individual families might have preserved more or less genuine accounts of their ancestors reaching back to the Hindu period, but the accuracy of these could not be tested, and they would touch only incidentally upon the general history of society in old times. For a general view of the social history they had to rely partly on these family stories without discrimination, and partly on the current traditions about social and political history, readjusting the two and filling in the gaps by means of an imaginative reconstruction. This seems to be the genesis of the elaborate but varying accounts of the *Kulaji* literature discussed above.[2]

[1] Cf. R. C. Majumdar. "An Indigenous History of Bengal" (*Proc. of the Indian Historical Records Commission*, XVI. 59 ff.)

[2] It would be a tedious task to give detailed reference to the statements made in this Appendix. In addition to the *Kulaji* texts the following works in Bengali may be consulted for supplying the necessary data.

(a) Lāl Mohan Vidyānidhi Bhaṭṭāchārya. *Sambandha-nirnaya* (first published in 1874, 3rd ed., 1909).

(b) Mahimāchandra Majumdar. *Gauḍe Brāhmaṇa* (1st. ed. 1889, 2nd. ed. 1900).

(c) Nagendra Nath Vasu. *Vaṅger Jātīya Itihāsa.*

(d) Kālīpada Bhaṭṭāchārya. *Rāḍhiya Brāhmaṇa-kulatattva* (1934)

In conclusion, it may be mentioned that anthropometric tests are definitely against the view that the Brāhmaṇas or Kāyasthas of Bengal are descended from those of Kānyakubja.[1]

(*e*) Umesh Chandra Gupta, *Jāti-tattva-vāridhi,* the second part being also known as *Vallāla-moha-mudgara.*

For criticism of the historical value of the *Kulajis,* cf. Chanda. *Indo-Aryan Races,* Ch. v and a series of five articles entitled "Vaṅgīya Kulaśāstrer Aitihāsik Mūlya" by Dr. R. C. Majumdar (published in *Bhāratavarsha,* in 1346 B.S. Kārtika-Phālguna). The authorities for most of the statements made in this Appendix and a fuller discussion of many points briefly treated here will be found in these articles.

[1] This will be evident from what has been said above on pp. 558-59.

APPENDIX II

GAṀIS OF THE RAḌHIA AND VARENDRA BRAHMAṆAS

The *Kulajis* mention fifty-six *gāṁis* of the Rāḍhīya Brāhmanas and one hundred *gāṁis* of the Vārendra Brāhmaṇas under five *gotras*.

Rāḍhīya Gāmis

Śāṇḍilya *gotra* (16)—Vandyaghaṭī, Gaḍagaḍī, Keśarakunī Kusumakulī, Pārihāla, Kulabhi, Ghoshalī, Seyu, Māsachaṭaka, Vaṭavyāla, Vasuyārī, Kayarāla, Kuśārī, Kulakuli, Ākāśa, Dīrghāṅgī.

Bhāradvāja *gotra* (4)—Mukhaiṭī, Ḍiṇḍisāyī, Sāharika, Rāyī.

Kāśyapa *gotra* (16)—Guḍa, Amvulī, Bhūrigrāmī, Tailavāṭī, Koyārī, Parkkaṭī, Simalāyī, Poshalī, Palasāyī, Haḍa, Poḍāri, Pāladhī, Pītamuṇḍī, Chaṭṭa, Bhaṭṭagrāmī, Mūlagrāmī.

Sāvarṇa *gotra* (12)—Gāṅgulī, Kuṇḍa, Siddhala, Dāyī, Nandī, Vālī, Ghaṇṭeśvarī, Pālī, Puṁsika, Siyārī, Shāṇḍeśvarī, Nāyārī.

Vātsya *gotra* (11)—Mahintyā, Ghoshāla, Pūtituṇḍa, Pūrvagrāmī, Pippalāī, Chautkhaṇḍī, Kāñjilāla, Dīghala, Simbulāla, Kāñjāri, Vāpuli.[1]

Vārendra gāṁis

Śāṇḍilya *gotra* (14) — Rudravāgchi, Lāheḍi, Sādhuvāgchi, Champaṭī, Nandanāvāsī, Kāmendra, Siharī, Tāḍoyālaviśī, Matsyāśī, Champa, Suvarṇa, Toṭaka, Pushāṇa, Beluḍi.

Bharadvāja *gotra* (22)—Bhādada, Lāḍuli, Jhāmāla (Jhampati), Āturthī, Rāī, Ratnāvalī, Uchharakhi, Gochchhāsi, Bāla, Śākti, Simbivahāla, Sariyāla, Kshetragrāmī, Dadhiyāla, Puti, Kāchati, Nandīgrāmī, Gogrāmī, Nikhaṭī, Pippalī, Śriṅgakhorjāra, Gosvālambi.

Kāśyapa *gotra* (18) — Maitra, Bhāduḍī, Karañja, Bālayashṭhī, Modhāgrāmī, Balihārī, Moyāli, Kirala, Bījakuñja, Śaragrāmī, Saha-

[1] *VJI.* Pt. I. 116, 126; Pt. II. 21. The Rāḍhiya Brāhmanas had originally fifty-six *gāṁis*. Later on three more were added to them. The list given above, which follows Vāchaspatimiśra, contains the names of fifty-nine *gāṁis*. The so-called *Kārikā* of Hari Miśra gives us the list of fifty-six *gāṁis*. Bokaṭyāla and Jhikrāḍi of the Śāṇḍilya *gotra*, and Hijjala of the Vātsya *gotra*, as mentioned by the *Kārikā*, do not find place in the list of Vāchaspati. Kulakuli, Kayaḍi or Koyāri, Bhaṭṭa, Puṁsika, Dīghala, and Ākāśa *gāṁis*, referred to by Vāchaspatimiśra, are not mentioned in the *Kārikā*. According to some Dighala, Puṁsika, and Bhaṭṭa are the three new *gāṁis*, which were added to the list of fifty-six.

grāmī, Kaṭigrāmī, Madhyagrāmī, Maṭhagrāmī, Gaṅgāgrāmī, Belagrāmī, Chamagrāmī, Aśrukoṭi.

Sāvarṇa *gotra* (19)—Siṁdiyāḍa, Pākaḍī, Dadhi, Śṛiṅgī, Medaḍi, Undhuḍi, Dhundhuḍi, Tātoyāra, Setu, Naīgrāmī, Nedhuḍi, Kapālī, Ṭuṭṭari, Pañchavaṭī, Nikaḍi, Samudra, Ketugrāmī, Yaśogrāmī, Śītalī.

Vātsya *gotra* (24)—Sānnyāla, Bhīmakālī, Bhaṭṭaśālī, Kāmakālī, Kuḍamuḍi, Bhāḍiyāla, Laksha, Jāmarukhī, Simalī, Dhosāli, Tānuri, Vatsagrāmī, Deüli, Nidrālī, Kukkuṭī, Boḍhagrāmī, Śrutavaṭī, Akshagrāmī, Sāhari, Kālīgrāmī, Kalihaya, Pauṇḍrakālī, Kālindī, Chaturāvandī.[1]

Names of some of these *gā͠mis* are found in the records of the pre-Muslim period. Ārtihara's son Sarvānanda, the author of *Ṭīkā-sarvasva*, describes himself as Vandyaghaṭīya.[2] The *Kulajis* mention Atihara as belonging to Vandyaghaṭīya *gā͠mi*.[3] Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva's mother was the 'daughter of a Vandyaghaṭīya Brāhmaṇa'.[4] Bhavadeva and the donee of the Belāva copper plate, both belonging to the Sāvarṇa *gotra*, were residents of the village Siddhala in Uttara-Rāḍhā.[5] A Brāhmaṇa of Taṭaka in Varendrī settled in Vikramapura in the Dacca district.[6] Halāyudha, the chief judge in the court of Lakshmaṇasena, connects his mother with Gochchhāshaṇḍī.[7] The *Sadukti-karṇāmṛita* of Śrīdharadāsa mentions Karañja, Tailapāṭī, Bhaṭṭaśālī, Śakaṭī and Ratnāmālī (Ratnāvalī ?)[8]. The Ādāvāḍī copper-plate refers to Diṇḍi *gā͠mi*, Pālī *gā͠mi*, Seü *gā͠mi*, Māsachaṭaka, Mūla, Sehaṇḍāyī, Puti, Mahāntiyāḍā, and Karañja-grāmī.[9] Names of the villages Matsyāvāsa, in North Bengal, and Bhūriśreshṭhī and Pūrvagrāma in Rāḍhā are known from early records.[10] Nārāyaṇa, in his *Chhāndogya-pariśishṭa-prakāśa* mentions that Kāñjivillī, Tālavāṭī, in Uttara-Rāḍhā, Chaturthakhaṇḍa, Vāpaḍalā and Hijjalavana were seats of his family *(kulasthāna)*.[11] Śrīnivāsa, the court-poet of Lakshmaṇasena, belonged to Mahintāpanī-vaṁśa.[12] Aniruddha-bhaṭṭa, the preceptor

[1] *VJI*. Pt. II. 21.

[2] *TSS*.

[3] *VJI*. Pt. I. 140.

[4] *IB*. III. 33.

[5] *Ibid*. 33, 21.

[6] *EI*. XVII. 356. Cf. Toṭaka *gā͠mi*.

[7] *Brāhmaṇa-sarvasva*. *IC*. I. 505. *Cf*. Gochchhāsi *gā͠mi*.

[8] Ed. Ramāvatāra Sarmā. Introd. 43, 47, 58, 71, 81. *Cf*. Tailavāṭi *gā͠mi*.

[9] *Bhāratavarsha*, Pausha 1332 p. 78; *IB*. 181.

[10] *EI*. XV. 301. Cf. Matsyāsi *gā͠mi*; Śrīdhara's *Nyāya-kandali*. *JAHRS*. IV. 158-162.

[11] *India Office Cat*. (Vol. I, Pt. I, No. 450); Dacca University MS. No. 4092). *Cf*. Chautkhaṇḍī Bāpula or Bapuli *gā͠mis*.

[12] *Adbhuta-sāgara*; *IA*. 1922, p. 47. *cf*. Mahintyā *gā͠mi*.

of Vallālasena, was Chāmpāhiṭī or Chāmpāhaṭṭīya.[1] Jīmūtavāhana calls himself Pāribhadrīya.[2]

All these names of places in their usual or abbreviated forms are referred to as *gāṁis* of the Rādhīya and Vārendra Brāhmaṇas in the *Kulajis*.

[1] *JASB.* 1912, 348. Cf. Champāṭī *gāṁi*. The donee of the Manahali Grant of Madanapāla is Vaṭeśvara, son of Śaunaka, grandson of Prajāpati, and great-grandson of Vatsa. They belonged to Kautsa *gotra*, and they had the *pravaras* of Śāṇḍilya, Asita, and Devala. Vaṭesvara was Champāhiṭṭīya and a resident of Champāhiṭṭī (*Champāhiṭṭīyāya Champāhiṭṭī-vāstavyāya* ...) (*GL.* 154).

The Kautsa *gotra* has the *pravaras* of Āṅgirasa or Māndhātā, Ambarīsha, and Yauvanāśva (*VJI.* Pt. I. 46), and not Śāṇḍilya, Asita, and Devala, which are the *pravaras* of the Śāṇḍilya *gotra* (*Ibid.* 47). This anomaly cannot be explained. Champāṭī is a *gāṁi* of the Śāṇḍilya *gotra* of the Vārendra Brāhmaṇas. Vaṭeśvara was outside the society of the Rāḍhīya and Vārendra Brahmans, as he belonged to Kautsa *gotra*. But that he was closely related to Śāṇḍilya *gotra* admits of no doubt. Some Saptaśatī Brāhmaṇas are found belonging to Kautsa *gotra* (*Ibid.* p. 88). The Saptaśatīs have forty-two *gāṁis*, some of which are identical with those of Rāḍhīyas and Vārendras. But Champāṭī is not mentioned as one of them. It is obvious that Champāhiṭṭī was more than a place of residence to Vaṭeśvara. It was his *gāṁi* or the seat of his family (*kula-sthāna*).

[2] Cf. colophons of *KV*. Pāribhadra has been taken as equivalent to Pāri(hāla), which has given the name to a *gāṁi* of the Rāḍhīya Brāhmaṇas (*KV*. Introduction, p. viii).

APPENDIX III

FUNERAL RITES AND CEREMONIES

After death the dead body was cremated, unless the age of the deceased was less than two years. An idea of the method of cremation can be had from a perusal of Aniruddha-bhaṭṭa's *Pitṛi-dayitā* (pp. 74-84) and *Hāralatā* (pp. 119-192). In these works the method of cremation, as prevalent among the Sāmavedī Brāhmaṇas of those days, is described as follows :—

When the dying person's condition became hopeless, and he exhibited signs of the approach of death, he was taken out of the house in which he was lying, and laid down on the ground, with his head turned towards the south. The place, at which he was laid, was already besmeared with cow-dung and strewn over with blades of *kuśa,* the tips of which were turned towards the south. In this position he was made to give to a Brāhmaṇa a piece of gold, a piece of silver, a piece of land of the measurement of a *go-charma* (cow-hide), a lamp, a copper vessel filled with sesamum and covered with two pieces of cloth, and a black cow, of which the horns were covered with gold, the hoofs with silver, and the back with copper, and which was furnished with a milking vessel of bell-metal covered with two pieces of cloth. All these gifts, except the last one, were made with the object of getting rid of sins committed in this life and attaining heaven, but the last one was intended to enable him, after death, to cross the river Vaitaraṇī which is supposed to run by the dreadful gate of Yama's residence. The Brāhmaṇa recipient had to mutter the *Sāvitrī* before receiving the gifts which were followed by the offer of *dakshiṇā* (fee).

After death, the dead body was besmeared with clarified butter and bathed with water. While thus bathing, the person, who bathed it, had to think of holy places, mountains, rivers and seas. The dead body was then stripped of all its garments and dressed with a piece of sacred cloth, an upper garment and a sacred thread, besmeared with sandal-paste and other scents, and adorned with flowers. A piece of gold was placed in each of the seven places, *viz.*, two ears, two nostrils, two eyes and the mouth. The dead body was then covered with a sacred cloth and taken by the deceased person's sons, or blood-relations on his father's side, or kinsmen, or by other Brāhmaṇas, to the burning ground which was generally situated on the bank of a river, or near water. While the dead body was thus carried, one of the accompanying persons carried the fire with which

the dead body was to be cremated. This fire was *śrauta*, *smārta* or *laukika* (common) according as the deceased maintained the *śrauta* or the *smārta* fire, or maintained no fire at all. Another person took some rice in an unannealed vessel. Half of this rice was poured out on the way, and the remaining half was taken to the burning ground. After reaching the burning ground they selected a suitable place, besmeared it with cow-dung, drew a line there, and placed on this line some blades of *kuśa*, on which the *agni-dātā* (*i.e.* the person entitled to set fire to the dead body) offered to the deceased, after the method of offering *piṇḍas*, the rice brought there with the dead body. Then the *agni-dātā* took his bath and made, with the help of others, a large pile of wood, on which the dead body was placed on its back with its head turned towards the south. The implements of sacrifice, such as the ladle, the winnowing-basket, two pieces of fire-producing wood (*araṇi*), the mortar and the pestle, *etc.*, which the deceased used in life were also placed on different parts of the body. In placing the dead body on the funeral pile care was taken to see that it was furnished with clothes and a sacred thread and was not naked. Next, the *agni-dātā* took the fire in his hand, turned round the dead body by keeping it to the right, placed his right knee on the ground near the head of the dead body, and, after citing the *mantra* "*asmāt tvam=abhijāto=si*" (thou art born from him) *etc.*, set fire to the pile, without tears or fear, at the place where there was the head. When the body was mostly consumed by fire and only a very small part of it remained, it was covered with burning charcoals and buried underground. After the burning was over, the members of the party gave the clothes of the deceased to the Chaṇḍālas and others who lived in the cemetery, took their bath, and offered libations of water to the deceased. They then changed their clothes, sipped water, and sat on a grassy spot outside the village. Those, who were older or more venerable among them, were to allay grief (*śokāpanodana*) by referring to the transitoriness of all things on earth and the inevitability of death, and by pointing out, with examples, how the tears shed in grief by the deceased person's relations and others cause great distress to him and bring him down from heaven. If the dead body was burnt out by day-time, they were not to enter the village before night-fall, and if it was burnt at night, they were to wait till day dawned. After entering the village, they sat outside the house until the *agni-dātā*, being followed by one of the members of the party with a club in his hand, brought water from a neighbouring pool, cooked rice with it and offered the balls of rice in the prescribed manner to the deceased at the gate of the house. They then bit three leaves of *nimba*, and, after washing their feet and sipping water, touched the *durvā*-

sprouts, a *samī* tree, fire, water, cow-dung, a bull, and a he-goat. They touched their own heads and all other limbs with *ghee* and grains of white mustard, stepped on pieces of stone and iron, and entered their houses.

If a person died when away from home, his body was brought home and burnt in the above manner. If his body was not available, his bones were brought, soaked with *ghee,* covered with wool, and burnt in the same way along with his implements of sacrifice. In the absence of bones, an effigy was made with leaves of *śara* (reed) and *palāśa,* covered with an antelope-skin, tied with a woolen thread, besmeared with water mixed with finely powdered barley, and burnt.

Death was followed by a period of impurity, which was determined by various factors, such as the nature of relation of the persons with the deceased, their occupation, their caste, their performance or non-performance of *śrauta* or *smārta* rites, the caste, age, or character of the deceased, *etc.* During this period the persons undergoing impurity were required to avoid all kinds of physical comfort such as sitting on fashionable seats, use of bedsteads, *etc.*, and become strict vegetarians. The sons of the deceased were to avoid salt for ten or twelve days according to capacity. They were not allowed to use any metallic utensil, and had to bear in their hands a piece of iron or a small weapon of the same metal for three days. During the period of impurity, or, in case of incapacity, on the first, third, seventh and ninth days, the sons of the deceased invited, for the benefit of the departed soul, their blood-relations on their father's side to bathe and dine with them. From the second day they offered balls of rice, or barley-meal (*saktu*), or fruits, to the deceased according to the prescriptions of the *Smṛitis*. On the fourth day, water for bath and cow's milk for drink were offered to the deceased in the evening in two earthen pots which were then suspended in the air during the night and thrown into water in the morning. This practice might be repeated for nine nights more for greater benefit to the departed soul.

On the second or third day the bones of the deceased were collected from the burning ground, placed in an earthen pot which was furnished with a cover and tied round with a piece of thread, and buried underground in a sacred place. These bones were taken out and thrown into the Bhāgīrathī in opportune times.

In case of death of children aged less than two years, the dead body was adorned by the relatives with ornaments, flowers, scents, garlands *etc.*, placed in an earthen pot, and buried underground in a sacred place outside the village. No fire, no libations of water, and

no collection of bones were necessary in such cases, and the relatives were advised not to entertain any grief.

Persons eligible for setting fire to the dead body were the following :—the eldest of the living sons, or wife, or daughter, or younger brother, or elder brother, or father, or paternal uncle, or grandfather, or maternal uncle, or mother's father, *etc.*—in the case of males ; and son, or daughter, or co-wife's son, or husband, or son's wife, or brother, *etc.*—in the case of females.

The method of cremation, followed by the Ṛigvedī and Agnihotrī Yajurvedī Brāhmaṇas, differed from the above methods in a few minor points only.

Śūdras were allowed to touch neither the dead bodies of Brāhmaṇas nor the fire with which these bodies were to be cremated. But if none of the higher castes was available to carry the dead body of a Brāhmaṇa to the cremation ground, the Śūdras might take it there. In case of incapacity of Brāhmaṇas, the Śūdras might carry fuel to the burning ground, but they were not allowed to prepare the funeral pile.

In the case of Śūdras no removal from the house was compulsory even at the time of death. They might be kept indoors even when they breathed their last. But, as in the case of the other higher castes, all the earthen wares of the house were to be thrown away, after the dead body had been removed to the burning ground. As the Śūdras had no *śrauta* fire to maintain, the method of cremation was necessarily simpler in their case.

CHAPTER XVI

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

I. Sources

THE materials available for the reconstruction of the economic history of Bengal in ancient times are extremely meagre. There are no such documents as the Domesday Book, the court rolls, the guild rolls, the pipe rolls and the craft ordnances and statutes, on which a student of the early economic history of England depends for his study. Yet it will be wrong to suggest that nothing like these ever existed in ancient Bengal. A large number of inscriptions, belonging to the Gupta and post-Gupta periods, reveal that during the 5th and 6th centuries A.D. there existed in this province a class of officers called *pustapālas* or record-keepers, who were attached both to the villages and district head-quarters, and whose obvious business was to maintain records of lands with their boundaries, demarcations and titles. It is a misfortune that not a fragment of these valuable records, written perhaps on palmyra-leaves, has come down to us. But this may not be the only loss that posterity has suffered. A careful study of the inscriptions of the Sena kings seems to suggest that by the beginning of the twelfth century A.D. Bengal had something like authoritative field-to-field, or cadastral, surveys and their accompanying record of holdings and rentals. There are reasons for believing that these surveys were not confined merely to lands and villages gifted away in pious endowments and thus rendered revenue-free, but extended to others from which the kings continued to derive the bulk of their revenue. What a wealth of materials we would have had to work upon, if the records of the *pustapālas* and the land-surveys of the Sena kings had been preserved! In their absence, all that we can do is to glean a few isolated facts concerning the economic condition of the people from such fragmentary sources of information as archaeology, occasional notices contained in literature, and the accounts of foreign travellers and historians.

II. Rural Settlements

The most noteworthy fact concerning the economic life of ancient Bengal is the preponderance of rural settlements. From the commencement of the historical period, these seem to have always

dominated the landscape of this province. The people established themselves in villages, and organised their lands—the fields, meadow and wood-lands—to serve their essential needs. A large number of these villages (*grāmas*) are mentioned in contemporary inscriptions, and although they varied considerably in size,[1] they seem to have been all alike in their close dependence on the utilization of the soil on which they stood. Broadly speaking, they appear also to have been of one uniform pattern. For, as far as available evidence indicates, they were usually of the 'nucleated,' not of the 'single farm' type. That is to say, the rural population lived in compact groups, and not in widely scattered habitations. Why it was so, it is difficult to say. It may be suggested, however, that the nucleated village is best adapted to an agrarian system in which cultivation prominently figures, whereas scattered settlements have their *raison d'etre* in an economic scheme where the emphasis is on pasture.

Inscriptions further reveal that the villages usually consisted of certain well defined parts, *viz.*, village settlement or habitat (*vāstu*), arable land (*kshetra*), and natural meadow-land (*go-chara*), which provided pasture for live-stock. The expression *tṛiṇa-pūti-go-chara-paryantaḥ*, mentioned in most of the Pāla and Sena land-grants, suggests that the pasture-ground produced various kinds of grass, and was usually located in a corner of the village or along the village boundaries. Apart from these, most of the villages also contained pits and canals (*garta* and *nāla*), which might have served the purpose of drainage, barren tracts (*ushara*), tanks, reservoirs and temples, besides cattle-tracks (*go-patha* or *go-mārga*) and ordinary roads and paths. A few villages are also stated to have been in possession of woodlands or jungles,[2] where the common folk probably went to gather their fire-wood and litter. It is thus clear that the various types of land, attached to the village, were not only distinguished and classified from the point of view of their usefulness to man, but were organised for exploitation according to certain systems and customary practices so as best to satisfy human needs.

[1] *Cf.* the areas of the villages in the Naihāṭi Plate of Vallālasena and the Govindapur and Tarpandīghi Plates of Lakshmaṇasena (*IB*. 78, 97, 100). Particularly small villages appear to have borne the appellation of *pāṭaka*, from which perhaps the modern term *pāḍā* has been derived. *Cf.* the Mādhāinagar Plate of Lakshmaṇasena, which mentions two such *pāṭakas*, *viz*. Chaḍaspasā-*pāṭaka* and Guṇḍīsthirā-*pāṭaka* (*ibid*. 115). Similarly the Madhyapāḍā Grant of Viśvarūpasena refers to Ajikulā-*pāṭaka* and Ghāghara-kāṭṭi-*pāṭaka* (*ibid*. 178-79)

[2] *EI*. II. 357; *IB*. 63 (*sa-vana*), 74, 87 (*sa-jhāṭa-viṭapa*).

III. URBAN SETTLEMENTS OR TOWNS

Although Bengal was primarily a land of villages, towns or urban settlements were by no means rare. Reference has already been made to a large number of these towns as known from epigraphic and literary evidence.[1] The factors which contributed to the growth of these towns were various. It is possible, for instance, to trace the growth of Puṇḍravardhana to three principal causes: first, it was a place of pilgrimage; secondly, it was the seat of a court or the capital of a province; and finally, it was advantageously situated along the main trade-route of North Bengal. Tāmralipti, again, seems to have owed its long-continued prosperity to its strategical location in relation to the contemporary routes of trade,[2] and the accessibility of a productive hinterland. It is not impossible that a few towns might have been primarily brought into being by administrative or political reasons; but contemporary evidence proves that they were often emporiums of trade besides being political centres. Further, an analysis of the sites and positions occupied by the ancient towns of Bengal shows that they were of such a geographical character that they could be utilised as 'nodes' or 'centres of routes' by land or by water.

The chief features which distinguished urban from rural settlements seem to have been much the same in Bengal as elsewhere in the ancient or mediaeval world. Both literary and epigraphic evidences make it clear that whereas the rural population was mainly dependent on the soil and its produce, the towns, although not perhaps wholly divorced from agricultural activity, tended to serve some or all of a wide variety of functions, commercial, industrial, political, judicial and military. But in contemporary estimation the most distinctive characteristic of the towns was their comparative richness and luxury. The *Rāmacharita* (III. 31-32) refers to Rāmāvatī, founded by Rāmapāla, as "a city of rows of palaces" and as possessing "an immense mass of gems." The *Rājataraṅgiṇī* (IV. 422) speaks of the "wealth of the citizens" of Puṇḍravardhana. The Deopārā inscription of Vijayasena draws pointed attention to the simplicity of the (village-dwelling) Brāhmaṇas in contradistinction to the luxury of the townsfolk. "Through the grace of Vijayasena," runs the epigraph, "the Brāhmaṇas versed in the Vedas have become the possessors of so much wealth that their wives have to be trained by the wives of the townspeople

[1] *Supra* pp. 29 ff.

[2] Hiuen Tsang, who visited this town, says that it lay near an inlet of the sea, "where land and water communications met" (Watters, II. 189-90).

(to recognise) pearls, pieces of emerald, silver coins,[1] jewels and gold from their similarity respectively with seeds of cotton, leaves of *śāka,* bottle-gourd flowers, the developed seeds of pomegranates and the blooming flowers of the creepers of pumpkin-gourd."

IV. LAND TENURES

Land was the bed-rock of ancient Bengal's political economy. It was the main source of wealth and the chief support of life. Even so, our knowledge of the system or systems of land-tenure, as they obtained in this province in ancient times, is extremely vague and incomplete. Most of the early copper-plate grants refer to the sale or gift of waste lands for pious purposes. The right of the state over these lands and the procedure by which they were sold or alienated to private individuals have been discussed in a preceding chapter.[2] It may be added here that the estates thus created either by sale or by gift were marked off from the neighbouring holdings. The copper-plate Grants often give us the details of these boundary-marks. Where, however, no natural boundary-marks existed, the new holdings were delimited by such artificial devices as chaff and charcoal *(chira-kāla-sthāyi-tush-āṅgār-ādīnāṁ chihnaih)*[3] or pegs (*kīlaka*) 'bearing the impress of a string of lotus seeds' (*kamal-āksha-māl-āṅkitā*).[4] The holdings themselves were governed by a law described in contemporary documents as *nīvī-dharma* (Dāmodarpur Plate. No. 1),[5] *akshaya-nīvī-dharma* (Baigrām and Pāhārpur Plates)[6] or *apradā-dharma* (Dāmodarpur Plate, No. 5).[7] It was a peculiar kind of tenure by which the purchaser, or the person or institution on whose behalf the land was transferred after purchase, obtained the right of perpetual enjoyment,[8] but not of further alienation by sale or mortgage. In other words, the state, although it sold away plots of land out of the unappropriated waste, still reserved to itself certain rights over

[1] The word here in the original is *rūpya*. N. G. Majumdar translates it as 'silver coins' (*IB.* 54). But as *rūpya* is contrasted with the white flower of bottle-gourd, I presume the author meant no coin, but plain silver.

[2] *Supra* pp. 266-71.

[3] Baigrām CP. (*EI.* XXI. 82).

[4] Mallasārul CP. (*EI.* XXIII. 160).

[5] *EI.* XV. 130.

[6] *Ibid.* XXI. 82; XX. 63.

[7] *Ibid.* XV. 143.

[8] This is clearly indicated by the expressions "*putra-pauttra-kramena*" and "*chandra-tār-ārkka-sthiti-kāla-sambhogyam*" used in the copper-plates of Gopachandra and Dharmāditya (*IA.* XXXIX. 204, 196).

the property, and the purchaser or the donee was allowed only the usufructuary right over the land. Whether all holdings in the country were regulated by the law of *nīvī-dharma,* we have no means to ascertain; the probability, however, is that it applied only to estates created for pious purposes.[1] It is also not definitely known whether lands alienated by sale or gift under this form of tenure were rent-free, or "became liable," as Dr. Ghoshal suggests, "to a progressive enhancement of the revenue till the normal rate was reached."[2] There are good reasons to think, however, that immunity from taxation was one of the privileges enjoyed by the assignee in such cases. It is necessary to emphasise that the holdings under discussion were, without exception, created for pious purposes; and the age-old tradition of this country has been to regard pious endowments as rent-free.[3] The Baigrām Plate definitely states that the alienation of three and a half *kulyavāpas* of fallow field (*khila-kshetra*) and homestead land (*vāstu*) was effected "in accordance with the principle of perpetual endowment (*akshaya-nīvī*) ... free from (the liability of payment of) any kind of taxes" (*a-kiñchit-pratikarāṇām*). The Nidhanpur Plate of Bhāskaravarman[4] shows that rent-free pious endowments were not unknown in Bengal in the sixth and seventh centuries A.D. It further proves that the loss of the copper-plate, which registered such an endowment, involved the loss of this immunity from taxation, unless, of course, a fresh charter was granted renewing the privilege.

Inscriptions ranging from the eighth to the twelfth century, and belonging to Pāla, Sena, and other contemporary dynasties, introduce us to pious endowments of a somewhat different character. These were, with rare exceptions, made by kings in favour of temples and religious foundations, of individuals like priests and learned Brāhmaṇas, and sometimes of institutions and persons combined. The conditions and immunities attaching to these grants are found enumerated in the copper-plate charters which registered them. For instance, the Khālimpur Plate of Dharmapāla, the earliest of these charters, records the grant of four villages 'with the (immunity from) penalties for the ten offences' (*sa-daśāpachārāḥ*), 'with the immunity

[1] That the law of *nīvi-dharma* applied not merely to estates created out of waste lands, but extended to pious grants of settled villages, is shown by the Vappaghoshavāṭa Grant of Jayanāga, which records how an entire village was given away by a Sāmanta to a Brāhmaṇa under the conditions of *akshaya-nīvī* (*EI.* XVIII. 63).

[2] U. N. Ghoshal, *Agrarian System in Ancient India* (1930), p. 41.

[3] *Cf. Kauṭilīya Arthaśāstra*—Bk. II, Ch. I; *Yājñavalkya Smṛiti*, I. 318.

[4] *Kam. Sas.* 17.

from all burdens' (*parihṛita-sarva-pīḍāḥ*) [1], 'with the immunity from all taxes' (*akiñchit-pragrāhyāḥ*), 'according to the maxim of the uncultivable land' (*bhūmi-chchhidra-nyāyena*), and 'to last as long as the sun, moon and earth shall endure' (*ā-chandr-ārka-kshiti-sama-kālam*). In addition, the donee was to receive all those taxes in kind and in cash which the cultivators in the alienated villages had hitherto paid to the sovereign.[2] In some of the subsequent grants this list of immunities and privileges is further supplemented by the addition of other concessions such as 'the rent of temporary tenants' (*? s-oparikaraḥ*) and 'the prohibition of entrance by regular and irregular troops' (*a-chāṭa-bhaṭa-praveśaḥ* ; *infra* p. 648).

It is obvious that these were grants in perpetuity, rent-free, and accompanied with the assignment of all revenues (*pratyāyaḥ*) accruing to the crown. What is not obvious, however, is whether they made over to the donee merely the state-share of the produce and other state-rights in the land alienated, or conveyed to him the proprietorship of the land as well, that is, an out and out gift of soil and revenue both.[3] If the latter was the case, it would involve either of the two assumptions — that the king was regarded as the ultimate owner of the soil or that he made the grants out of what may be called the royal demesne. It is probable, however, that the bulk of these grants transferred to the grantees merely the right to receive the royal share of the produce; they were not intended to deprive any existing land-holder of his right; in other words, they did not convey a title to the land itself. Sometimes the land donated already belonged by right of purchase to the donee, for whose support revenue charges were remitted. In such cases, the land became what may be described as "free-hold."[4]

It should be noted that these beneficial tenures, called *śāsanas* and *agrahāras* in contemporary documents, never covered more than a fraction of the agricultural land; they did not touch the mass of the cultivators in the country. What rights the bulk of the cultivators possessed in the soil they tilled we do not know. That some

[1] I have followed Dr. U. N. Ghoshal's translation of these technical terms. See Ghoshal, *Hindu Revenue System* (1929), pp. 244-46.

[2] *Cf. supra* pp. 277-78.

[3] That some of the grants belonged to this category may be inferred from the statement in the Edilpur Plate of Keśavasena that the grantee was to enjoy the land "having (thereon) erected temples, excavated tanks and so on, and planted betelnut, cocoanut and other trees" (*IB.* 130). The same clause occurs in the Madhyapāḍā Plate of Viśvarūpasena (*IB.* 147), but in this instance a portion of the land donated had been previously purchased by the donee.

[4] Two instances of this kind are mentioned in the Madhyapāḍā Plate of Viśvarūpasena (*IB.* 140 ff.).

of them, at any rate, were non-proprietary or expropriétary tenants may be inferred from the copper-plate charters.[1] That all or most of them had to pay various kinds of taxes and local cesses is also certain. But besides the payment of taxes and cesses, the holding of land seems to have entailed various other obligations. This is shown by the express provision in the land-grants exempting religious endowments from certain burdens, enumerated in general terms as '*sarva-pīḍā*.' What these consisted of is nowhere clearly explained, but specific mention is made of the right of entry of '*chāṭa* and *bhaṭa*.' The latter seems to refer to certain services which the cultivators had occasionally to render to an army such as provision of quarters and supply of provisions or labour. The exact purport of the other term is not known, but it was evidently of the same nature and might have included the provision of food on the occasion of a king or high official visiting the locality and 'milk-money' *i.e.* the perquisite paid on the occasion of the birth of a prince, marriage of a princess, *etc.* These were not regular taxes, but customary dues paid on specific occasions. On the other hand, the land-grants indicate that the possession of land carried with it certain inherent privileges. These included the right to everything under the ground and above it, such as mines, salt, wood, bush and trees including fruits. The right may have extended to the use of adjoining water, *i.e.* tanks or rivers and fishing therein.

v. AGRICULTURE

The beginnings of agriculture in Bengal, as in the rest of India, have to be traced back to the pre-historic past (*supra* p. 562). Even so, it seems very probable that in the initial stage both settlement and agriculture followed the courses of the great river-systems of the province, which acted as powerful fertilising agents of the soil in their neighbourhood. With the growth of population, however, (owing partly perhaps to an increase in birth-rate, partly to immigration) there came about a steady increase in the cultivated area. One can discern indications of this extension of cultivation in the copper-plate inscriptions of the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries. As stated above (p. 265), most of these interesting documents (*supra* pp. 49, 51) relate to the purchase of land. Curiously enough, however, the character of the land purchased is, in most cases, described as ***aprada, aprahata*** and ***khila*** (unsettled, uncultivated and

[1] For instance, the Ashrafpur Plate of Devakhaḍga (*supra* pp. 86 ff.) mentions a *pāṭaka* of land which was 'enjoyed by Śarvāntara but cultivated by Mahattara Śikhara and others' (*MASB.* I. 88, 90).

fallow). One particular plate (Gunaighar Grant of Vainyagupta)[1] describes five plots of land donated to a Buddhist monastery as *śūnya-pratikara-hajjika-khila-bhūmi* (water-logged, waste land, paying no requital or tax). Another (Tippera Plate) records how a community of Brāhmaṇas were settled and given lands for cultivation within a forest region, " where deer, buffaloes, boars, tigers, serpents, *etc.*, enjoy, according to their will, all pleasures of home life."[2] These instances suggest the inference that the three centuries, to which these inscriptions relate, witnessed a steady extension of cultivation and rural settlement. It is possible, though we have no positive evidence to prove it, that this movement of agricultural extension commenced much earlier, and continued with intermittent force and varying effect from century to century, and from region to region. The pressure of a growing population, the growing desire of priests for material prosperity, and the religious zeal of kings, — all served in various ways to organise a widespread attack on some of the 'negative' lands of the province, which settlement and agriculture had at first avoided.

But whatever might have been the cause of this extension of cultivation, there is no doubt that by the seventh century A.D. the bulk of the people had taken to it as the chief means of livelihood. The Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang bears testimony to the fact that in all parts of the province the countryside was regularly and assiduously cultivated, and produced grains, flowers and fruits in abundance.[3] The description of Varendrī in the *Rāmacharita* (III. 2 ff) confirms the testimony of the Chinese pilgrim. And so do the copper-plate inscriptions ranging from the 8th to the 13th century, which, moreover, mention the cultivators *(kshetra-karāḥ* or *karshakāḥ)* as an important class apart from the officials, Brāhmaṇas and others, and in various ways convey an idea of the important rôle they played in the economic life of the community.

Concerning agricultural practice as it obtained in ancient Bengal, it is not possible to draw any comprehensive picture. It seems certain, however, that paddy *(dhānya)* was cultivated from a remote antiquity as the staple food-crop of the people. The Mahāsthān Brāhmī inscription probably refers to a rice granary located at Puḍanagala *(Puṇḍranagara)*.[4] The *Rāmacharita* (III. 17) mentions " paddy plants of various kinds " grown in Varendrī. The inscriptions of the Sena kings mention " smooth fields growing

[1] *IHQ.* VI. 56, 59-60.
[2] *EI.* XV. 307, 311.
[3] Beal-*Records.* II. 191, 194, 199, 200-201.
[4] For different interpretations, *cf. EI.* XXI. 83 ff ; *IHQ.* X. 57 ff.

excellent paddy,"[1] and "myriads of villages, consisting of land growing paddy in excessive quantities."[2] Kālidāsa's *Raghuvaṁśa* (IV. 37) affords us a glimpse into the method of rice cultivation. Describing Raghu's conquest of the Vaṅgas, the poet remarks that Raghu uprooted and replanted them (*utkhāta-pratiropita*) like rice plants. Rice, as is well known, is sown in three different ways — broadcast, by drill, and by transplantation from a seed-bed where it has been broadcast sown. Of these the third method is, as a rule, the least risky and the most profitable. That it was known and practised in this province at least as early as the fifth century A.D. seems clear from the aforesaid statement of the great Sanskrit poet. The different processes of reaping and threshing also appear to have been similar to those prevailing at present.[3]

Another food-crop cultivated was probably sugar-cane. The classical author, Aelian, speaks of a kind of honey expressed from reeds which grew among the Prasioi. Lucan says that the Indians near the Ganges used to quaff sweet juices from tender reeds.[4] Suśruta (45, 138-40) mentions a variety of sugar-cane called *pauṇḍraka*; and most commentators of Sanskrit lexicons agree that it was so named because it was grown in the Pauṇḍra country (North Bengal). These statements, taken together, naturally suggest the inference that certain species of sugar-cane were cultivated in Bengal from very early times. It is not improbable, as a recent writer has pointed out, that from the term *pauṇḍraka* have been derived such modern vernacular names as *pauṇḍiā, pauṇḍā, puṇḍi, etc.* — a celebrated variety of sugar-cane cultivated in almost all parts of India.[5]

Besides the above, contemporary records mention a variety of other crops grown in different parts of Bengal. These include malabathrum and spikenard, mentioned in the *Periplus of the Erythraean* Sea among the exports of this province.[6] These were obviously of an excellent quality, and were grown on an extensive scale in the Eastern Himalayas. Another cultivated crop appears to have been mustard. The Vappaghoshavāṭa Grant of Jayanāga

[1] *IB.* 129.

[2] *Ibid.* 89-90.

[3] *RC.*[2] (*Kavi-praśasti*, v. 13) refers to the threshing floor where the reaped crops were spread out and threshed by means of bullocks which went round and round over them.

[4] McCrindle, *Ancient India*, p. 122, f.n. 3.

[5] *JBORS.* IV. 437. The *Rāmacharita* (III. 17) also seems to refer to the cultivation of "sugar-cane plants' in Varendrī.

[6] Schoff, *Periplus.* p. 47.

(7th century A.D.) mentions the existence of a *sarshapa-yānaka* (mustard-channel) in the Audambarika-*vishaya* of Karṇasuvarṇa.[1] Further, epigraphic records, ranging from the eighth to the thirteenth century, tell us that betel-nut palm (*guvāka*) and cocoanut (*nārikela*) were extensively grown up and down the land.[2] Betel-vines were also cultivated in the form of plantations (*barajas*) and formed, under the Sena kings, a source of revenue to the state.[3] Cotton was also cultivated to feed an important industry of the province.[4] Fruits like mango (*āmra*), bread-fruit (*panasa*), pomegranate (*ḍālimva*), plantain, *bassia latifolia* (*madhūka*), date (*kharjura*), citron (*vīja*) and figs (*parkaṭi*) were also widely cultivated.[5]

VI. MEASURES OF LAND

We have no knowledge regarding the measures of land as used in Bengal earlier than the 5th century A.D. The land-grants of the Gupta period usually mention two technical terms, *viz. kulyavāpa* and *droṇavāpa* in connection with land measurement; but in the absence of adequate data, their equivalents in modern measures cannot be determined.[6] A *kulyavāpa* is usually taken to mean an area of land which could be sown with a *kulya* measure of seed;

[1] For references cf. *supra* p. 80 f.n. 1.

[2] The Ashrafpur Grant of Devakhaḍga (*supra* pp. 86 ff.) specifically states that the donee should enjoy the donated land by the cultivation of betel-nut palms and cocoanuts (*MASB.* I. 90). The *Rāmacharita* (III. 19) refers to Varendrī as "the congenial soil for cocoanut trees in the world."

[3] *IB.* 141, 178, 180, *etc.*

[4] Kauṭilya (Bk. II. Ch. 11) mentions *kārpāsika* or cotton fabrics manufactured in Vaṅga. According to the inscription of Vijayasena (*v.* 23), ordinary rural folk were familiar with seeds of cotton. The early *Charyā-padas* also refer to cotton cultivation (*BGD.* 41). Referring to the people of Bengal, Marco Polo says, "They grow cotton, in which they derive a great trade" (Yule, *Marco Polo*, II. 115).

[5] The cultivation of mango and bread-fruit is mentioned in a large number of Pāla and Sena inscriptions. Hiuen Tsang refers to the abundant growth of *panasa* in Puṇḍravardhana and gives a detailed account of this fruit which was 'highly esteemed' (Beal-*Records*. II. 194). The Govindapur Plate refers to an "orchard of pomegranates" (*ḍālimva-kshetra*) (*IB.* 97). The plantain tree is frequently depicted in the Pāhārpur terra-cotta plaques (*Paharpur.* 70). It also occurs among the sculptures, for instance, in the Chaṇḍī images of the Rajshahi Museum (*supra* p. 451). *Vīja* (citron) and *kharjura* (date) are mentioned in the Khālimpur Plate of Dharmapāla, *parkaṭi* (fig) in the Koṭālipāḍā Plate of Dharmāditya, and *bassia latifolia* (*madhūka*) in the Rāmgañj Plate of Īśvaraghosha (*IB.* 154, 156), and probably also in the *Rāmacharita* (III. 21).

[6] For a full discussion of this point cf. *Bhāratavarsha*, 1349-1350 B.S. Part I pp. 263 ff., 384.

while a *dronavāpa*, according to various ancient lexicons, was equivalent to one-eighth of a *kulyavāpa* in area. This equation of 1:8 between a *kulyavāpa* and *dronavāpa* is confirmed by the Pāhārpur Plate, according to which four plots of land measuring respectively 4, 4, 2½ and 1½ (=12) *dronavāpas* corresponded to an area measuring 1½ *kulyavāpas*.

The actual work of measurement during the Gupta period was done by means of *nalas* (reeds). In some of the Gupta copper-plates, however, the term *nala* is qualified by the figures 8 and 9 (*ashṭaka-navaka-nalena* or *ashṭaka-navaka-nalābhyām*. Kotālipāḍā-Plates and Baigrām Plate). Mr. F. E. Pargiter has taken the view that these figures relate to the number of reeds used in measuring the breadth and length respectively of a *kulyavāpa*, and on the basis of this supposition has calculated the area of a *kulyavāpa* as "a little larger than an acre."[1] But two considerations seem to militate against this hypothesis: The Pāhārpur Plate, instead of giving two different figures (8 and 9), mentions only one figure, *viz*. 6 (*shaṭka-naḍair-apaviñchchhya*). This can only mean that in measuring the land alienated by this particular deed a *nala* measuring six cubits was used. Secondly, in some of the inscriptions where the figures 8 and 9 are given, we get the additional information that the *nala* used was measured by the hand of a particular individual (*e.g. Darvvīkarma-hastena*, Baigrām Plate; *Śivachandra-hastena*, Koṭālipāḍā Plates). These facts seem to lead to two conclusions—first, that the figures 6, 8 and 9 "stood for the corresponding numbears of cubits representing the measurements" of the *nalas*; and second, that *nalas* of different measurements in cubits were used in different regions of the province. The simultaneous mention of the two figures 8 and 9 in the Faridpur and Baigrām Plates is not easy to explain. It is probable, however, that two different *nalas* were employed, one for measuring the length and the other for measuring the width, of the area disposed of.[2] Mr. Pargiter's view about the area of a *kulyavāpa* cannot, therefore, be accepted.[3]

As time passed, the word *kulyavāpa* fell out of use, and other technical terms of land-measure gradually came into vogue. Of these the one denoting the largest unit of measure was the term

[1] *IA*. 1910, pp. 214-16. Dr. R. G. Basak also interprets the expression *ashṭaka-navaka* in the same way as Pargiter (*Cf. AIV*. II. 494).

[2] *IC*. VI. 176.

[3] *Kulyavāpa* seems to be equivalent to several acres. According to some, *kulyavāpa* still survives in the modified form *kulyavāya* in Cachar district, and as the latter is equivalent to 14 *bighās*, the same must also be the area of the former (*Bhāratavarsha*, 1349. Part I, p. 384). But this is hardly convincing.

pāṭaka or *bhū-pāṭaka,* which is frequently mentioned in the inscriptions of the Khaḍga, Chandra, Varman and Sena kings. Its earliest mention, however, occurs in the Gunaighar Grant of Vainyagupta (dated 507 A.D.). The same plate also contains conclusive evidence to prove that a *pāṭaka* was equivalent to forty *droṇas* or *droṇavāpas* in area. Assuming that a *droṇa* of the early sixth century (Gunaighar Plate) was the same as the *droṇa* of the fifth (Baigrām and Pāhārpur Plates), one must conclude that the *pāṭaka* was five times as big as the *kulyavāpa.* Besides *pāṭaka* and *droṇa,* other terms used in post-Gupta records to indicate measurement of land, are *āḍhaka* or *āḍhavāpa, unmāna* or *udāna, kāka* or *kākinika,* all these being inter-linked by an unknown equation.[1]

As in the earlier Gupta, so in the later Sena period, the actual work of measurement was done by means of *nalas* or reeds, varying in length from region to region. The land-grants of Sena kings reveal that there were at least four varieties of *nalas* in use within their kingdom. These were the *Samataṭīya-nala,* which was used as a standard of land-measure not merely in Samataṭa but also in the Khāḍī-*vishaya* of the Puṇḍravardhana-*bhukti* (Barrackpur Plate of Vijayasena); the *vṛishabha-śaṅkara-nala,* probably introduced by king Vijayasena (*Vṛishabha-śaṅkara* being one of his appellations), and employed to measure land in Uttara-Rāḍhā of the Vardhamāna-*bhukti* (Naihāṭi Plate of Vallālasena) and Vyāghrataṭī situated within Puṇḍravardhana-*bhukti* (Ānuliā Plate of Lakshmaṇasena); the *nala* current in Varendrī (*tatratya-deśa-vyavahāra-nalena,* Tarpandīghi Plate of Lakshmaṇasena) ; and lastly the *nala* of 56 cubits said to have been in vogue at Vetaḍḍa-*chaturaka* in Paśchima-khāṭikā belonging to the Vardhamāna-*bhukti* (Govindapur Plate of Lakshmaṇasena).[2]

Besides the above, a few other technical names of land-measure are available from later land records such as *bhū-khāḍī, khāḍikā,*[3]

[1] The only information we get in contemporary inscriptions is that 12 *angulas* (digits) were equivalent to 1 cubit, and 32 cubits were equivalent to 1 *unmāna* (Sundarban Plate of Lakshmaṇasena). The relationship of *unmāna* with *āḍhaka* is not clear, but most ancient texts agree that 4 *āḍhakas* or *āḍhavāpas* were equivalent to 1 *droṇa* [*Cf.* L. D. Barnett, *Antiquities of India,* p. 208; Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra,* tr. by R. Shamasastri (1923), p. 126], and this is supported by the Pāhārpur Plate, where 2½ *droṇavāpas* (l. 9) are again referred to as 2 *droṇavāpas* and 2 *āḍhavāpas* (l. 15).

[2] The Bhowal CP. of Lakshmanasena seems to refer to the use of a *nala* measuring 22 *hastas* (cubits) in the north-eastern parts of Dacca district (*EI.* XXVI. 13).

[3] *Cf.* Mādhāinagar Plate of Lakshmaṇasena (*IB.* 112).

hala, droṇa,[1] *bhū-hala, kedāra* or *bhū-kedāra.*[2] Neither the equation between *bhū-khāḍī* and *khāḍikā,* nor that between *hala* and *droṇa* is, however, known. But in some districts of Eastern Bengal (*e.g.* Sylhet) *hala* and *kedāra* are still used as units of land-measure, and the relation between the two is 12 *kedāras*=1 *hala.* In all probability a *hala* originally meant the extent of land that could be turned with a plough. According to Buchanan, "the usual extent which can be cultivated by one plough is 10 large *bighās,* or 15 Calcutta *bighās,* or 5 acres."[3] In the district of Sylhet, however, a *hala* or *hāla* corresponds to about 10½ *bighās,* or about 3½ acres.[4]

Here we may notice a significant fact about some of the units of land-measure mentioned above. As already suggested, the term *hala* or *hāla* originally meant an area of land which could be cultivated by one plough. It has also been suggested that the term *kulyavāpa* originally signified an extent of land which could be sown with seeds contained in a *kulya* (winnowing basket). Other terms such as *droṇavāpa* (or its shorter form, *droṇa*) and *āḍhavāpa* (or *āḍhaka*) may be etymologically explained along similar lines. These terms of land-measure, therefore, seem to originate from the practical methods used in cultivation, and bear witness to the important fact that the rural economy of ancient Bengal was essentially agricultural, not pastoral.

VII. CRAFTS AND INDUSTRIES

Although agriculture formed the predominant feature of Bengal's economy, a number of crafts and industries were developed at a very early age and played important parts in the life of the people. The most noteworthy among these seem to have been textiles, sugar, metal-work, stone-work, wood-work and pottery.

The history of textile manufacture in Bengal goes back to the remotest antiquity. At the time when the *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya was composed, it was already a well-established industry with a wide reputation in the country.[5] The author mentions four varieties of textile commodities which were produced in Bengal in his time,

[1] Cf. Dhullā Plate of Śrīchandra (*IB.* 166).

[2] Cf. Bhāṭerā Plate of Govindakeśava (*EI.* XIX. 285). The word *vāṭī* in this inscription, taken to mean 'house,' probably also denotes a measure of land.

[3] Buchanan, *Dinājpur* (1832), p. 234.

[4] *EI.* XIX. 279.

[5] *Arthaśāstra,* Bk. II. Ch. II.

viz. kshauma, dukūla, patrorṇa and *kārpāsika*. *Kshauma*[1] was linen, but of a coarse variety, being mixed with cotton. Its chief seats of manufacture were Puṇḍravardhana (North Bengal) and Benares. A pure and finer form of linen was called *dukūla*. It was of three varieties; the first, produced in Lower Bengal (*Vāṅgaka*), was white and soft; the second, produced in North Bengal (*Pauṇḍraka*), was black and "as soft as the surface of a gem;" while the third, manufactured at Suvarṇakuḍya in Kāmarūpa, had the "colour of rising sun." *Patrorṇa* appears to have been wild silk. Amara (II. vi, 3, 14) defines it as "a bleached or white *kausheya*," while the commentator says that it was a fibre produced by the saliva of a worm on the leaves of certain trees. According to Kauṭilya, *nāga* tree, *likucha* (*artocarpus lakoocha*), *vakula* (*mimusops elengi*) and *vaṭa* (*ficus bengalensis*) were the sources of these fibres. The author adds that *patrorṇa* was produced in three regions, *viz.* Magadha, Puṇḍra and Suvarṇakuḍya. It is significant that wild silk of the best quality is still produced in these districts. *Kārpāsika* obviously meant cotton fabrics. These were manufactured in various parts of India, but Vaṅga and six other regions, as Kauṭilya affirms, produced the best variety.

It is thus evident that as early as the time of Kauṭilya Bengal had attained to great eminence as a seat of textile manufacture. The records of the succeeding ages tend to show that she retained this eminence down almost to the beginning of the nineteenth century. It may be noted that the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea,* written in the first century A.D., includes "muslins of the finest sorts" among the exports of Bengal.[2] Referring to Ruhmī (which Elliot identifies with Bengal),[3] the Arab merchant Sulaiman wrote in the ninth century A.D. that there was "a stuff made in this country which is not to be found elsewhere; so fine and delicate is this material that a dress made of it may be passed through a signet-ring." Sulaiman adds that it was made of cotton, and that he was not speaking from hearsay, but had himself seen a piece of it.[4] Marco Polo, who visited India in the thirteenth century, states that in his time Bengal still plied a lucrative trade in cotton goods.[5] In

[1] Kshīrasvāmin, commenting on *Amara-kośa* (II. 6. 113), explains *kshauma* as made of the fibre of *kshuma*. This is explained as *Atasī* both in *Amara-kośa* (II. 9. 20) and the commentary on Manu (II. 41) by Nandana. *Atasī* (or *Atasī*) is a synonym for common flax, hemp, linseed *etc.*

[2] Schoff, *Periplus*, p. 47.

[3] *E & D.* I. 361.

[4] *Ibid.* I. 5. Another Arab writer, Ibn Khurdadba (10th century A.D.) says that the country produced "cotton cloths and aloe wood" (*ibid.* I. 14).

[5] Yule, *Marco Polo*, II. 115. Marco Polo mentions cotton, but obviously he meant cotton goods.

the fifteenth century Ma Huan, the Chinese traveller, witnessed five or six varieties of textile goods being manufactured in this province.[1]

Another industry which seems to have made considerable headway in our period was sugar. We have already (*supra* p. 650) cited evidence to show that Bengal was probably one of the earliest homes of sugar-cane cultivation. Suśruta mentions that the *pauṇḍraka* canes (which grew in the Pauṇḍra country) were noted for the large quantity of sugar which they yielded. In the thirteenth century Marco Polo noticed that sugar was one of the important commodities of export from Bengal.[2] Early in the sixteenth century the Portuguese traveller, Barbosa, found Bengal competing with South India in the supply of sugar to different parts of India, Ceylon, Arabia and Persia.[3]

The manufacture of salt by means of evaporation either from infiltrated sea-water or from subsoil brine was also probably known and practised in certain areas. The Irdā Plate (*supra* p. 133) of the tenth century A.D. records the grant of a village in the Daṇḍabhukti-*maṇḍala* (*supra* p. 27) of the Vardhamāna-*bhukti*, along with its salt pits (*lavaṇākaraḥ*).[4] Similarly, the Rāmapāl Plate of Śrīchandra[5] (eleventh century A.D.) and the Belāva Plate of Bhojavarman[6] (twelfth century A.D.) mention the grant of villages, located in the Pauṇḍra-*bhukti*, "along with salt" (*sa-lavaṇah*). On the other hand, it should be noted that salt is not mentioned in any of the land-grants of the Pāla and Sena kings. It is, therefore, permissible to infer that although the manufacture of salt was known and practised in certain places, at any rate from the tenth century onwards, it had not developed into any considerable industry. The dampness of the climate and the large amount of fresh water discharged into the sea by the Ganges and the Brahmaputra might have hampered the growth of any large-scale salt manufacture.

Among other crafts, pottery appears to have been practised on an extensive scale. A large number of specimens of the pottery used by the monks of Pāhārpur, and dating back probably to the eighth or ninth century A.D., have been recovered in recent years. These include large storage jars, spotted vases or *loṭās*, cooking utensils, dishes, saucers, inkpots and lamps of various designs. The potter's art is also exemplified by the immense variety of terracotta plaques discovered at Mahāsthān (Bogra), Sābhār (Dacca), Pāhārpur and other places. Some contemporary inscriptions refer to potters

[1] *JRAS.* 1895, pp. 531-32.
[2] Yule, *Marco Polo*, II. 115.
[3] *The book of Duarte Barbosa* (Hakluyt Society, London), II. 112, 146.
[4] *EI.* XXII. 155, 158.
[5] *IB.* 5.
[6] *Ibid.* 21.

(*kumbhakāra*)[1] and potter's ditch (*kumbhakāra-garta*)[2]; and the context in which these are mentioned seems to show that pottery as an industry was conducted from rural settlements for the most part.

Along with pottery, metal-work of various kinds must have been known from very early times. No settled agricultural community could get on without blacksmiths, whose services were required in the manufacture and repair of agricultural implements; and contemporary evidence proves that apart from agricultural implements, the blacksmiths manufactured other articles of general use like water-vessels of iron,[3] and weapons of war such as arrow-heads, spear-heads and swords.[4] Besides working in iron, the metal-workers practised the art of bronze-casting with considerable skill. This is shown by the discovery in different parts of Bengal of a large number of bronze or octo-alloy images, dating from the Gupta period onwards (*cf.* Chs. XIII, XIV). Jewellery, too, provided occupation to a considerable group of metal-workers, for it was the fashion of the rich to use gold and silver dishes and ornaments made of pearls and precious stones and metals (*supra* pp. 613, 618) for personal adornment. The Deopārā inscription of Vijayasena mentions "flowers made of precious stones, necklaces, ear-rings, anklets, garlands and golden bracelets," worn by the wives of the king's servants.[5] The same epigraph speaks of temple girls "the charms of whose body were enbanced by (the wearing of) jewellery."[6] The Naihāṭi Plate of Vallālasena refers to necklaces of pearls worn by ladies of royal blood.[7] The *Rāmacharita* (III. 33-34) mentions "jewelled anklet-bells," "charming ornaments set with diamonds, *lapis lazuli*, pearls, emeralds, rubies and sapphires," and "necklaces with central gems and pure pearls of round and big shape." The *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī* casually alludes to the use of "golden and silver dishes" in the place of Lakshmaṇasena.[8]

[1] Kamauli cp. (*GL.* 135).

[2] Nidhanpur cp. (*Kam. Sas.* 26).

[3] The Edilpur Plate of Keśavasena mentions "water-vessels of iron" (*IB.* 128).

[4] Some arrow-heads and spear-heads have been discovered at Pāhārpur. The *Agni Purāna* (245, 21 ff.) refers to Aṅga and Vaṅga as important centres of sword-manufacture. The swords manufactured in Vaṅga, we are assured, "were characterised both by keenness and their power of standing blows" (*Cf.* P. C. Chakravarti, *The Art of War in Ancient India*, pp. 163-64).

[5] *IB.* 52.

[6] *Ibid.* 55.

[7] *Ibid.* 77.

[8] *E & D.* II. 309. The *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* mentions the existence of a gold mine near the mouth of the Ganges (*supra* p. 45).

Two other categories of craftsmen were the workers in stone and wood. The numerous pre-Muhammadan stone images discovered in Bengal (*cf.* Chs. XIII, XIV) and the beautifully engraved inscriptions on stone slabs bear eloquent testimony both to the volume and skill of the stone-carvers' profession. It has been suggested that the black chlorite stone, out of which most of these images were carved, was probably obtained from the Rajmahal Hills and carried in boats to the different centres of the sculptor's art in the province.[1] Incidentally, this throws light on an important article of internal trade. Alongside stone-carving, wood-carving and carpentry also appear to have been practised on an extensive scale, although owing to the perishable nature of wood only a few architectural specimens of wood-carving of the pre-Muhammadan period have come down to us (*supra* p. 515). It seems evident, however, that the wood-workers built houses and temples and also manufactured house-hold furniture,[2] boats, ships, and wheeled carriages (*supra* pp. 615-16).

Another important industry was ivory-carving. The Bhāṭerā Plate of Govinda-Keśava mentions an ivory-worker (*dantakāra*) by name,[3] while the Edilpur Plate of Keśavasena refers to "palanquins supported by staffs made of elephant's tusk."[4] Among minor arts, crafts, professions and industries may be mentioned those of scribes florists, garland-makers, conchshell-workers, braziers, goldsmiths, painters, masons, oilmen, fishermen, washermen, barbers, butchers, distillers of wine *etc.* who formed so many distinct castes (*cf.* Ch. XV). As regards fishery, we get additional evidence from the land-grants, some of which refer to the right of fishing as included in the grant.[5]

Concerning the nature and organisation of industrial labour, we hardly know anything definite. There are certain statements, however, occurring here and there in the inscriptions, which suggest the inference that the workers in various trades and industries were organised in some kind of corporate groups. Reference has already been made above (*supra* p. 266) to the trade and craft-guilds in Bengal in the fifth and sixth centuries A.D., and the important position occupied by the *nagara-śreshṭhī* (guild-president), *prathama-sārthavāha* (chief merchant) and *prathama-kulika* (the chief artisan) in the local administration. Similarly, the Deopārā inscription of Vijayasena refers to Rāṇaka Śūlapāṇi, who engraved the stone, as *Vārendra-śilpi-goshṭhī-chūḍāmaṇi* ("crest-jewel of the guild of Vārendra artists"). The exact meaning of *goshṭhī* may be a

[1] Bhatt.-*Cat.* xviii.
[2] *EI.* XIX, 286.
[3] *Ibid.* pp. xxxv-xxxvi. Cf. also *supra* p. 615.
[4] *IB.* 127.
[5] Pāla Ins. No. 6.

matter of doubt,[1] but the possibility of its connoting a guild can never be altogether ruled out.

VIII. Trade—Inland and Foreign

The high antiquity of Bengal's inland and foreign trade is proved by the Jātaka stories, the accounts of Strabo and Pliny, and the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea.* Two factors seem to have promoted this early growth of commerce,—first, the qualitative and quantitative development of Bengal's industries, and secondly, the unrivalled facilities for movement afforded by the sea-coast and river-systems of the province.

1. *Internal Trade*

Oddly enough, we know much less about the inland commerce of ancient Bengal than about her foreign trade. The reason for this is that inscriptions, which form the most important source of our information concerning the early economic life of the people, do not, and cannot by their nature be expected to, deal with internal traffic. Nor do foreign travellers and historians help us in the matter, for their chief interest lay in the foreign trade of the province.[2] Yet the early development of a considerable foreign trade, to which reference will be made later, presupposes the existence of a certain amount of internal commerce. Occasional reference in later inscriptions also confirm this view. The mention of *haṭṭa-pati* (*supra* p. 282), *śaulkika* (p. 278) and *tarika* (p. 278) (officers in charge of markets, customs, tolls and ferries) in the land-grants indirectly testifies to the brisk nature of internal trade, and shows that the state derived from it a considerable revenue. The principal centres of inland trade were obviously the towns. The Koṭālipāḍā Plates (*supra* p. 51) bear witness to the fact that Navyāvakāśikā was a rendezvous of merchants and businessmen.[3] The Dāmodarpur Plates (*supra* p. 49) tell the same tale in regard to Koṭīvarsha.

[1] *IB.* 45-46.

[2] Compare, for instance, the accounts conatined in the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* and Marco Polo's *Travels*.

[3] We have references to ships and dock-yards and to customs-officers called *vyāpāra-kāraṇḍaya or vyāpāraṇḍya* in the two grants of the time of Dharmāditya, and *vyāpārāya-viniyukta* in the Grant of Gopachandra. These were, as Pargiter points out, obviously officials "charged with the duty of looking after trade" (*IA.* 1910, p. 212).

We learn from the *Kathā-sarit-sāgara*[1] that Puṇḍravardhana had a great market-place and streets lined with shops. Besides the towns, a certain amount of business was probably done in the villages also. The Dāmodarpur Plate No. 2 mentions a *haṭṭa* or market in connection with the purchase of a plot of land.[2] The Khālimpur Plate of Dharmapāla records the grant of four villages along with their *haṭṭikā,* which, according to Kielhorn, means "market dues."[3] The Irdā Plate similarly mentions the grant of a village "along with its market-place" (*sa-haṭṭa*),[4] while the Bhāṭerā Plate speaks of shops (*haṭṭiya-gṛiha*) and big markets (*haṭṭa-vara*) in some of the donated villages.[5]

The chief routes of internal trade were probably the waterways of the province, in proximity to which stood the principal towns. The rôle of the rivers in the economic geography of Bengal cannot be over-estimated. They fertilised the soil by the silt which they carried; they eliminated, to a large extent, the need for artificial irrigation; and being navigable far inland throughout the year, they served as 'corridors' or 'natural routes' for long-distance traffic. It is probable enough, although statistical data are lacking, that throughout the ancient and mediaeval periods they bore the greater part of the inland traffic of the province. Apart from the rivers, a certain amount of trade probably passed along land-routes. The itineraries of Fa-hien and Hiuen Tsang point to the existence of such land-routes connecting some of the important cities of the province. The Chittagong Plate of Dāmodara (*supra* p. 253) mentions a public road (*rāja-patha*), passing by the side of a village. In recent years Mr. K. N. Dikshit has discovered the remains of two ancient embanked roads in the neighbourhood of Dhanora.[6]

2. *Foreign Trade*

The history of Bengal's foreign trade may be traced back to at least four or five centuries before the birth of Christ. Strabo refers to the "ascent of vessels from the sea by the Ganges to Palibothra,"[7] and his information is probably derived from Megasthenes' account. Conversely, a number of Jātaka stories mention merchants

[1] Tawney's tr., II. 86.
[2] *EI.* xv. 133-34.
[3] *Ibid.* XXII. 155, 158.
[4] *ASI.* 1922-23, p. 109.
[5] *Ibid.* IV. 254.
[6] *Ibid.* XIX. 292.
[7] Mc.Crindle. *Ancient India* (1901), p. 16.

and businessmen taking ships at Benares,[1] or lower down at Champā (modern Bhagalpur),[2] and then either coasting to Ceylon or adventuring many days without sight of land to Suvarṇabhūmi.[3] The *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* proves that Bengal maintained an active overseas trade with South India and Ceylon in the first century A.D. The commodities exported are said to have consisted of malabathrum, Gangetic spikenard, pearls, and muslins of the finest sorts. They were all shipped from a 'market-town' called Gange (probably the same as Tāmralipti), and carried in vessels described in the *Periplus* as 'colandia.'[4]

In later centuries the overseas trade of Bengal seems to have increased both in volume and extent. This is probably the chief reason of the phenomenal growth of Tāmralipti as a port of first-rate importance.[5] It is hardly necessary to stress the fact that in all periods the city which controlled the mouth of the Ganges was commercially the most important in Eastern India, just as the city which controlled the gates of the Euxine was commercially the most important in Hellas. We can trace a succession of such dominant cities: Tāmralipti down almost to the end of the Hindu period; later, Saptagrāma till the close of the sixteenth century; then Hooghly, and finally Calcutta.

Taking Tāmralipti as the centre, we find radiating from it three principal routes of overseas trade. The first led in a south-easterly direction past the coast of Arakan to Burma and beyond. Most of the early voyages from Tāmralipti to Suvarṇabhūmi were probably made along this route. But there was a second line of overseas trade with the Malaya Peninsula and the Far East. Ships came along the coast up to Paloura, near modern Chicacole, and then proceeded right across the Bay of Bengal. This was known

[1] *Cf. Samudda-vāṇija-Jātaka* and *Saṅkha-Jātaka* (*Jātaka*, iv 159, No. 466; 15-17, No. 422).

[2] *Mahā-janaka-Jātaka* (*Jātaka*, vi. 34, No 539).

[3] R. K. Mukherji, *A History of Indian Shipping* (1912), pp. 31, 161, *etc.*; R. C. Majumdar, *Champā*, p. xi

[4] *Periplus*, 47. The *Milinda-pañha*, composed about the first century A.D., also refers to the oversea trade between Vaṅga and different parts of the world (*CHI*, p. 212).

[5] The fame of Tāmralipti as an emporium of trade spread all over India and even far outside its boundaries. Hiuen Tsang notes that "wonderful articles of value and gems are collected here in abundance, and therefore the people of the country are in general very rich" (Beal-*Records*, ii 200-201). According to the *Kathā-sarit-sāgara*, Tāmralipti was pre-eminently the home of rich merchants, who carried on overseas trade with such distant countries as Laṅkā (Tawney's tr. vi. 211) and Suvarṇadvipa (*ibid.* iii. 175), and used to propitiate the sea with jewels and other valuable articles to ensure safe voyages across (*ibid.* ii. 72).

to Ptolemy in the second century A.D. By the seventh century ships sailed directly from Tāmralipti to the Malay Peninsula. An interesting account of this route is preserved by I-tsing in his biography of Hiuen-ta, who made a direct voyage from Keddah to Tāmralipti.[1]

A third line of trade led in a south-westerly direction past the coasts of Kaliṅga and Coromandel to South India and Ceylon. As already said, use of this route is mentioned in the Jātaka stories and the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea.* Pliny also refers to it, adding that whereas in former days the island of Ceylon was thought to be twenty days' sail "from the country of the Prasioi," the distance "came afterwards to be reckoned at a seven days' sail, according to the rate of speed of our ships."[2] In the early years of the fifth century A.D., the Chinese pilgrim, Fa-hien, embarked at Tāmralipti on board a great merchant vessel and sailed to Ceylon *en route* to China, the voyage taking "fourteen days and nights." From the itinerary of I-tsing we learn that in the latter part of the seventh century numerous other Chinese pilgrims travelled along the same route in their voyages to and from India.

Besides the sea-routes, there seem to have been a number of land-routes by which Bengal's foreign trade was carried. One of these was the route which connected Puṇḍravardhana with Kāmarūpa. It was along this route that Hiuen Tsang journeyed to the latter kingdom in the seventh century A.D.[3] From very ancient times Kāmarūpa was noted for her textiles, sandal and *agaru,*[4] and it seems likely that these were taken to the main centres of business in Northern India along this highway of traffic. But Kāmarūpa was not the terminus of this route, for it seems to have extended eastwards to South China through the hills of Assam or Manipur and Upper Burma. This is testified to by the famous report which Chang-kien, the Chinese ambassador to the Yue-chi country, submitted in 126 B.C. When he was in Bactria he was surprised to find silk and bamboo which came from the Chinese provinces of Yunnan and Szechwan. On enquiry he was told of the rich and powerful country of India across which the caravans carried these products from southern China to Afghanistan. This route evidently continued in use till the ninth century A.D., and was joined by another from Annam. For the itinerary of Kia Tan (785-805 A.D.) describes the land-route from Tonkin to Kāmarūpa, which crossed the

[1] R. C. Majumdar, *Suvarṇadvipa,* I. 7; II. 350; *I-tsing.* pp. xxv, xxxiv.
[2] McCrindle, *Ancient India,* p. 103.
[3] Beal-*Records.* II. 195.
[4] *Arthaśāstra,* Bk. II. Ch. 11.

Karatoyā river, passed by Puṇḍravardhana, then ran across the Ganges to Kajaṅgala, and finally reached Magadha.[1]

More celebrated and frequented, however, was the line of trade which led westwards from various points in Bengal and joined the network of highways which converged at Benares. The *Kathā-sarit-sāgara* mentions merchants travelling from Puṇḍravardhana to Pāṭaliputra. I-tsing, who landed at Tārmralipti in 673 A.D., says that when he left the sea-port, "taking the road which goes straight to the west," many hundreds of merchants accompanied him in his journey to Bodh-Gayā.[2] A rock inscription of a chief named Udayamāna, which has been assigned on paleographical grounds to the 8th century A.D., reveals that merchants from such distant places as Ayodhyā used to frequent the port of Tāmralipti for purposes of trade.[3] These western routes formed the principal means of communication and also the grand military routes between Bengal and Northern India.

A third line of overland trade seems to have led through the passes of the Himālayas, past Sikkim and Chumbi Valley, to Tibet and China. The *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* bears testimony to the fact that as early as the 1st century A.D. "raw silk, silk yarn and silk cloth" came into Bengal from China and were re-exported to "Damirica by way of the river Ganges."[4] It is not impossible that much of this stuff came in along this line of trade. In later period this route became the great highway of Buddhist pilgrim-travel between Magadha and Tibet. Towards the end of our period horses in large number appear to have been imported into Bengal along this track. Referring to a town variously named as Karbattan, Kar-pattan or Karambatan, which has not yet been satisfactorily identified, but which was obviously located somewhere at the foot of the Himalayan range, the *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī* says:

> "Every morning in the market of that city, about fifteen hundred horses are sold. All the saddle horses which come into the territory of Lakhnauti are brought from that country. Their roads pass through the ravines of the mountains, as is quite common in that part of the country. Between Kamrup and Tibet there are thirty-five mountain passes through which horses are brought to Lakhnauti."[5]

A fourth overland route ran southwards, along the Kalṅga coast, to the South Indian peninsula.[6]

[1] R. C. Majumdar, *Champā*, pp. xiii ff; *BEFEO*. IX. 131 ff. 142-43.
[2] *I-tsing*. xxxi. [3] *EI*. II. 345. [4] *Periplus*. 48. [5] *E & D*. II. 311-12.
[6] This was followed by Hiuen Tsang (Beal-*Records*. II. 204 ff.) and presumably also by the Pālas, Senas, Cholas and the Eastern Gaṅgas in their military campaigns.

IX. MEDIUM OF EXCHANGE

The use of minted metallic coins as the medium of exchange marks a big forward step in civilisation, especially in its economic aspect. The question as to when metallic coins were first introduced in Bengal is involved in obscurity. It is certain, however, that they were known and used several centuries before the commencement of the Christian era. This is proved by three concurrent pieces of evidence. In the first place, the Mahāsthān Brāhmī inscription mentions coins called *gaṇḍaka,* and probably also *kākaṇika.* The former has been explained as a small piece of coin of the value of four *cowries,* while the latter is referred to in the *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya as a sub-multiple of the copper *kārshāpaṇa.*[1] Secondly, the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* records that a gold coin, known as *caltis,* was in vogue in the market-town of Gange (Tāmralipti?) at about the first century A.D.[2] But by far the most valuable evidence in this regard is furnished by the discovery of a large number of silver and copper punch-marked and cast coins, most of them dating back to the pre-Christian epoch. These have been found, sometimes in large number, in various localities of the province—in the neighbourhood of Berāchāmpā (24-Parganas),[3] near Manda (Rajshahi),[4] in the highland close to the river-bed at Tamluk,[5] and at Wari-Bator (Dacca).[6] There are good reasons to think that these punch-marked pieces represent the earliest coinage of Bengal, as perhaps also of many other provinces of India, and served for centuries the commercial needs of the people. The symbols punched on these coins are often similar to those found in other parts of India—a fact which shows that from very early times Bengal followed the main currents of general Indian economic life.

A few gold coins of the Kushān kings have been discovered in Bengal;[7] but there is nothing to show that they were used as medium of exchange within the province. They might have come by way of trade, along with pilgrims, or in the trail of an invading army. In the territory under the direct rule of the Kushān emperors gold was linked up with copper, and it is significant that not a single copper coin, struck by any Kushān king, has been discovered in Bengal.

[1] *Arthaśāstra,* tr. p. 95. For its relative place in the currency scheme of Kauṭilya *cf.* S. K. Chakrabortti, *Ancient Indian Numismatics,* p. 58.
[2] *Periplus.* 47.
[3] *ASI.* 1922-23, p. 109.
[4] *Ibid.* 1930-34, p. 255.
[5] *Ibid.* 1921-22, p. 74.
[6] *Annual Report of the Dacca Museum,* 1935-36, p. 5.
[7] *Supra* p. 45.

With the establishment of the Gupta empire, Bengal shared in the currency system introduced and maintained by that dynasty. The coinage of the Gupta monarchs was based essentially on gold and silver, though copper was not unknown. The discovery of a large number of Gupta coins, both of gold and silver, in almost every part of Bengal, shows that they came into fairly wide circulation within the province. Extant specimens prove that the earlier gold coins of the dynasty followed the standard of their Kushān prototypes, weighing about 122 grains; but from the time of Skandagupta onwards a deliberate attempt seems to have been made to revert to the old Hindu *suvarṇa* standard of 146·4 grains.[1] The silver coins of the Gupta monarchs show considerable variations in weight; but those circulating in the central and eastern provinces of the empire appear to have approximated the standard weight of silver *kārshāpaṇas, i.e.* 36 grains.[2]

Epigraphic records belonging to the Gupta period mention two varieties of coins, *viz.* the *dīnāra* and the *rūpaka,* as media of exchange in purchasing land. It is generally held that the former (derived from the Latin *denarius aureus*) denotes the gold, and the latter, the silver coins of the Gupta monarchs. Concerning the rate of exchange between the two, we get valuable information from the Baigrām Plate (*supra* p. 49). The epigraph records purchase of land at the price of 6 *dīnāras* for 3 *kulyavāpas* and 8 *rūpakas* for 2 *droṇavāpas* in area, the customary price in that locality being 2 *dīnāras* for each *kulyavāpa.* As already stated, one *kulyavāpa* was equivalent to 8 *droṇavāpas* in area. It is thus clear that the rate of exchange between the *dīnāra* and the *rūpaka* coins was 1:16.

But this raises an intricate problem as to the rate of exchange between gold and silver in Eastern India about the middle of the 5th century A.D. It is not difficult to estimate the ratio of the two metals, if the weight of the gold and silver coins is definitely known. Extant specimens of the gold and silver coins of Kumāragupta, to whose reign the Baigrām Plate has to be assigned, show that the former varied in weight from 117·8 to 127·3 grains and the latter from 22·8 to 36·2 grains. Taking the mean in each case, say 122 grains as the average weight of gold coins and 30 grains as the average weight of silver coins, and leaving out of consideration the percentage of alloy used in either case (of which there is no definite

[1] This is only a general statement, and must not be taken too literally. For a detailed study of the metrology of the Gupta coins, see Allan, *Catalogue of the Coins of the Gupta Dynasties* (1914), Introd. pp. cxxxi-cxxxv.

[2] *Ibid.* p. cxxxiv.

information), we have the formula of 480 grains of silver as equivalent to 122 of gold, and the relation between these numbers is approximately 4 to 1. Even if we take the view that the silver coins, which circulated in Eastern India, weighed 36 grains, the ratio of gold and silver would work out at 1:4.6.

This is, however, an extremely disconcerting position. From the Nāsik inscription of Ṛishabhadatta, dated 120 A.D., it has been estimated that in the second century A.D. the relative value of gold and silver in Western India was 1:10.[1] It is very probable that even in ancient times the rate of exchange between gold and silver did not vary greatly in different parts of India. If that were so, the question arises as to the cause of this tremendous fall in the value of gold in relation to silver in course of the next three centuries. Was it due to a sudden stoppage in the importation of silver, India having had to depend on foreign countries for the supply of that metal? Was this stoppage in any way connected with the break-up of the Roman empire in the fifth century A.D.? Or are we to infer that the term *dīnāra,* as used in contemporary documents, did not refer to the ordinary gold coins of the Gupta monarchs, but rather to those light-weight, debased gold coins, which are usually described as "Imitation Gupta" coins, and which have been found in such profuse number in different parts of Bengal?[2] These are problems which, in the present state of our knowledge, we are scarcely able to solve.

Whatever may be the correct explanation of the relative value of gold and silver in the 5th century A.D., the immediate successors of the Gupta monarchs in Bengal, while adhering to the traditions of Gupta gold coinage, seem to have altogether given up the practice of minting silver coins. This is shown by the fact that while not a single silver coin of any of these rulers has yet been discovered, a number of gold coins bearing the legends of Śaśāṅka, Jaya(-nāga ?), Samāchā(radeva) and other kings[3] have been found in different

[1] I have here followed Professor Rapson (*CCBM.* clxxxv) in preference to Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar (*Lectures on Ancient Indian Numismatics,* p. 192). The latter has worked out the ratio as 1:14; but his calculation is based on the theoretical standard of the Sanskrit classical works, not on the actual standard of coins in circulation.

[2] Cf. *supra* pp. 52-53. The extant specimens of these coins vary in weight from 75 to 92.5 grains, and Dr. N. K. Bhattasali is probably right when he says that they were "struck on the 50 *rati* or half-*suvarṇa* standard, of a *rati* of about 1.9 grains, *i.e.* an original weight of about 95 grains" (*JASB.* N. S. 1923, p. 61). If we then allow for the very large percentage of alloy used in these coins, the rate of exchange between gold and silver may approximately work out at 1:8 or 1:9.

[3] *Supra* pp. 53-54.

parts of Bengal. These coins, however, although conforming to the weight of the later Gupta gold coins (and consequently to that of Manu's *suvarṇa*), are in most cases debased in metal content, and inferior in style and execution to those of their prototypes. The times were difficult; the forces of disruption were rampant on all sides; and the kings seem to have resorted to debasing their currency with a view to retaining as much gold in their own hands as possible. The process thus started seems to have been continued for several generations[1] till, by the operation of what is called the Gresham's Law, gold coins wholly went out of circulation in Bengal.

It was probably during this period of monetary anarchy that *cowries*, which might have been in circulation even in earlier times,[2] established themselves as the only dependable medium of exchange in the province. A people, who had for centuries been accustomed to minted currency, could not be suddenly expected to revert to barter; and as the State failed to discharge its normal functions in the matter of coinage, and as the traditions of private coinage were long forgotten, there was hardly any alternative to the use of *cowrie* shells, which were known to have been in circulation about the same time in some other parts of India. When political stability was re-established in Bengal under the Pāla kings, an attempt appears to have been made to re-introduce minted currency. This is shown by the discovery of a few copper and silver coins, belonging to the Pāla period. Three copper coins of a "unique type showing a rather clumsily depicted bull on the obverse and three fish on the reverse" have been found at Pāhārpur, and these have been tentatively assigned to the early Pāla empire. Numbers of silver and copper coins of a second type have been found in Bengal and Bihar. From the legend "Śrī Vigra" on the obverse these are attributed to king Vigrahapāla, and are generally called Vigrahapāla-*dramma*, the term *dramma*, as a designation of coins, occurring in the Bodh-Gayā inscription of Dharmapāla (Pāla Ins. No. 1). V. A. Smith attributed the finer specimens of this type to Vigrahapāla I, and the debased ones to the second or third king of that name. K. N. Dikshit, however, thinks that the debased coins "may have been issued after the original by other rulers, not necessarily even of the Pāla dynasty."[3] But whatever view we might take of this, it seems

[1] The unattributed "Imitation Gupta" gold coins are usually assigned to this period (*JASB*. N. S. 1925, pp. 1-6; *supra* pp. 52-53). Dr. N. K. Bhattasali says that among the coins of this type, discovered at Sabhar (near Dacca), at least three stages in the process of debasement can be easily discerned.

[2] *Cf.* Fa-hien, p. 43.

[3] For the Pāla coins cf. *CCIM*. I. 233, 239. Pl. xxv. 10; *Supplementary CCIM*. 56-57; *ASI*. 1927-28, pp. 104-5, Pl. XLVIII (*e*); *Paharpur*. 19, 86, Pl. LVIII (*g*).

from the extreme scarcity and the generally debased character of these coins that the attempt of the Pāla rulers to introduce a currency of their own was a faint-hearted one and was soon abandoned. When we think of the long rule of the Pāla dynasty and the extent of its kingdom, its lack of currency becomes an intriguing problem, almost a mystery, which cannot be solved at present. The mystery is still more deepened by the fact that gold coins seem to have been profusely used in the neighbouring province of Kāmarūpa (Assam) even during the Pāla period. For, according to the Silimpur inscription, assigned to the eleventh century A.D., a Brāhmaṇa of Varendrī was offered nine hundred gold coins by Jayapāla, a king of Kāmarūpa.[1]

The copper-plate grants of the Sena kings refer to two coin-denominations, *viz. purāṇa* and *kapardaka-purāṇa*. They are usually mentioned in connection with the income from particular plots of land donated by kings. A comparative study of the grants would tend to show that the *purāṇa* and *kapardaka-purāṇa* were interchangeable terms, and not, as is usually supposed, the denominations of two different coins. It seems probable that the term *kapardaka* was prefixed to *purāṇa* so as to leave no room for doubt as to the identity of the coin specified, more or less in the same way as *bhū* was sometimes prefixed to *pāṭaka* and *droṇa* in order to make it clear that they were measures of space and not measures of weight.

Two different considerations prove the validity of the above hypothesis. First, in some land-grants the income derived from particular plots of land is described in figures (*e.g.* 200 in the Edilpur Plate of Keśavasena; 500 in the Śaktipur Plate of Lakshmaṇasena; 627 in the Madanapāḍā Plate of Viśvarūpasena; 100, 60, 140, 50, 25, 25, 50, 50 in the Madhyapāḍā Plate of Viśvarūpasena, *etc.*) without reference to any coin-denomination. If there were two different coins circulating side by side, it is certain that one or the other would have been mentioned in connection with these figures. Secondly, it is well known that the *purāṇa* was a silver coin, weighing 32 *ratis* or 58 grains. Had the Sena kings minted silver coins of this or of any other weight, it is very probable that at least a few specimens would have come down to us. Curiously, however, not a single coin, which may be attributed to any Sena king, has yet been discovered. On the other hand, the testimony of Minhāj (*supra* p. 242) indicates that the Muhammadans, when they first

[1] Dr. Basak who edited the inscription explains '*hemnāṁ śatāni nava*' as nine hundred gold coins (*EI.* XIII. 292, 295), and this seems to be the natural interpretation.

came to Bengal, noticed no silver currency in the country but found the people using *cowrie* shells in economic transactions. When the king intended to make monetary gift, says the Muslim historian, "the least gift he used to confer was a *lak* of *kauris*."[1]

It is clear, therefore, that under the Sena kings *cowrie* shells served as the medium of exchange in Bengal. What, then, is the meaning of the *purāṇa* or *kapardaka-purāṇa* so often mentioned in the Sena land-grants? Dr. Bhandarkar has suggested that it was a silver coin shaped like a *kapardaka* or *cowrie*.[2] The strongest argument against this view is that not a single coin of this type has been discovered here or elsewhere in India. The fabrication of such a coin was also difficult and would mark a sudden "retrogression in the evolution of coinage" in the country.[3] More plausible is the hypothesis, set forth by Dr. S. K. Chakrabortti, that the *kapardaka-purāṇa* was not an actual coin, but a mere abstract unit of account; that is to say, it was the value of a *purāṇa* counted out in *cowrie* shells. In other words, "payments were made in *cowries* and a certain number of them came to be equated to the silver coin, the *purāna*, thus linking up all exchange transactions ultimately to silver, just as at present the rupee, the silver coin, is linked up to gold at a certain ratio."[4]

[1] *Nasiri*. transl. p. 556. The Bengali *Charyā-padas* (*supra* pp. 383 ff.) refer to the use of *kavaḍī* (*cowrie*) and *voḍī* (*buḍī*) (*BGD.* 26). There is nothing to be surprised at in the use of *cowrie* even in a commercially developed community, for, even as late as 1750 A.D., duties were collected in Calcutta in *cowries* and many *bazar* transactions were also in *cowries* (Wheeler, *Early Records of British India*, p. 223).

[2] *Lectures on Ancient Indian Numismatics*, pp. 139, 176.

[3] *IHQ*. VIII. 597.

[4] *Ibid.* 599.

CHAPTER XVII

BENGALIS OUTSIDE BENGAL

No survey of the history and civilisation of the people of Bengal can be regarded as complete without some account of their activities outside the boundaries of their own province, both in and outside India. From very early times many sons of Bengal distinguished themselves in various spheres of life both in India and abroad. Apart from these individual instances, we must presume that Bengal, as an integral part of India, must have taken her due share in the various activities of the Indians, and contributed her quota to the general influence exercised by them, in the outside world. But it is not always easy to distinguish the part played in these respects by Bengal or any other region comprised within the great sub-continent of India. We propose, therefore, to touch briefly upon those incidents or episodes alone in which the Bengalis are specifically known to have taken the leading part.

I. Activities of Bengalis outside India

The chief activities of the Bengalis outside India lay in religious and commercial spheres. The port of Tāmralipti was the great emporium of trade between Northern India and the Eastern world across the sea. Being situated in the eastern extremity of India, Bengal also served as the connecting link, by way of land, between the great sub-continent and the extensive regions in the east, from South China to Burma and thence to Malay Peninsula and Indo-China. The Chinese evidence leaves no doubt that there was an active intercourse by both the land and sea-routes, and streams of traders, merchants, pilgrims and other classes of people followed them in their journey between India and the Far East (*supra* pp. 659 ff).[1] Apart from being an intermediary in trade and commerce, Bengal must, therefore, have played an important part in the great cultural association between the diverse civilisations of Eastern and South-Eastern Asia which forms such a distinguished feature in the history of this great continent for nearly one thousand and five hundred years.

[1] R. C. Majumdar,—*Champā*, pp. xiii-xxiv; *Suvarṇadvīpa*, Part I, Bk. I, specially Ch. iv.

Fortunately, this view, mainly based on general grounds, is corroborated by some specific instances.

As regards maritime and colonial activity, an inscription in Malay Peninsula, of the fourth or fifth century A.D., records the gift of a *Mahānāvika* (great captain) Buddhagupta, who was probably a native of Bengal.[1] Tradition also connects Bengal with the Indian settlement in the island of Ceylon (*v. supra* p. 39). The truth of the story of prince Vijaya may, however, be doubted, and no final conclusion is possible until fresh evidence is available.

But we are on surer grounds when we come to missionary activities. It is now admitted on all hands that Bengal exercised great influence on the development of later Buddhism in Java and neighbouring regions during the Pāla period.[2] An inscription in Java[3] definitely mentions that the *guru* (preceptor) of the Śailendra emperors was an inhabitant of Gauḍa (*Gauḍīdvīpa-guru*). This royal preceptor, named Kumāraghosha, set up an image of Mañjuśrī in the year 782 A.D., and was probably also the *guru* for whose worship the famous temple of Tārā at Kalasan had been built four years earlier. We are told that at the command of the *guru* some officers of the king built a temple, an image of goddess Tārā, and a residence for monks proficient in Vinaya-Mahāyāna. Reference has already been made above (pp. 121-22) to the grant of five villages by Devapāla, at the request of king Bālaputradeva of Suvarṇadvīpa, for maintaining the monastery that the latter had built at Nālandā. The intimate intercourse between the Pāla and the Śailendra kingdoms explains the great influence exercised by the Pāla art upon that of Java.[4] It has already been noted above (pp. 496-97), that such influence was by no means confined to Java, but also extended to the mainland, and the peculiar architectural style of a group of temples in Burma was probably derived from that of Bengal and neighbouring regions. As a further evidence of the close contact between Java and Bengal, reference may be made to the affinity between the scripts used on certain Javanese sculptures and the proto-Bengali alphabet.[5] This contact continued till at least the 14th century A.D.[6]

[1] R. C. Majumdar, *Suvarṇadvīpa*, I. 82-83.

[2] *Ibid.* II. 121 ff. [3] *Ibid.* I. 151-52. [4] *Ibid.* II. 304.

[5] H. B. Sarkar in *IHQ*. XIII. 597. Several other instances of cultural contact, noted by him in the same article, are neither definite nor conclusive.

[6] A Javanese text, composed in 1365 A.D., includes Gauda in a list of countries whose people came to the Javanese capital "unceasingly in large numbers ...... They came in ships with merchandise. Monks and distinguished Brāhmaṇas also came from these lands and were entertained" (*Suvarṇadvipa*, I. 336).

The influence of Bengal upon the development of art and religion in the Far East must thus be regarded as considerable, although sufficient data are not available to trace in details the relationship between them. We are, however, more fortunate in this respect in regard to Tibet, the other region where Bengal exercised a deep influence on the evolution of culture.

It is a matter of common knowledge that the form of Buddhist religion and monastic order in Tibet was largely shaped by a number of famous Buddhist teachers from Bengal. Fortunately, the Tibetan chronicles have preserved a detailed account of a large number of Indian *Paṇḍits* from the Pāla kingdom who visited the Land of Snow, and not only preached the Buddhist religion and translated Indian texts, but transmitted to that inaccessible region the various elements of Indian culture and civilisation. Their literary and religious activities have been treated in a general way in Chs. XI and XIII. Here we would refer to only a few distinguished persons among them who may be regarded, on reasonable grounds, to be inhabitants of Bengal. The detailed accounts of their lives are culled from Tibetan sources, and though much of them may be merely traditional, unsupported by positive testimony, they are still of great value, at least in so far as they hold out before us a general picture of the honour and respect accorded to the Bengali scholars and religious teachers in Tibet.

The native religion of Tibet was Bon-po. It advocated demon-worship and other sacrifices. During the reign of Srong-tsan Gampo, as noted above (p. 91), Buddhism was introduced in Tibet. Bon, however, remained the predominant religion in Tibet till the accession of Khri-srong-lde-btsan (*supra* p. 124), a descendant of Srong-tsan Gampo, in the middle of the eighth century A.D. Khri-srong-lde-btsan was a great devotee of Buddha. He invited Śāntirakshita (*supra* pp. 332-33),[1] who was at that time living in Nepal,

[1] For the account of Śāntirakshita and Padmasambhava that follows, *cf.* L. A. Waddell, *Buddhism of Tibet or Lamaism*, 20, 24, 25; *IP*. 49; *JASB*. LI. Part I, 7-8; *Pag Sam Jon Zang*, Part II, 170 ff. (see table of contents, pp. x ff.); A. H. Francke. *Antiquities of Indian Tibet*, II. 87-88. Śāntirakshita, also known as Śāntarakshita, whose Tibetan name was Zi-ba-htsho, became the high priest of Nālandā monastery in the first half of the eighth century A.D. S. C. Das points out from the Tibetan authority that Śāntirakshita was a native of Gauḍa. The *Pag Sam Jon Zang*, a work compiled in 1747 A.D., states (p. 112) that Śāntirakshita was born in the royal family of Zahor during the reign of Gopāla, and died when Dharmapāla was ruling. The identification of Zahor has been discussed above (p. 331, f.n. 8). Dr. B. Bhattacharya remarks that Zahor is a regular phonetic equivalent of Sābhār, a well-to-do village in the Dacca district, Bengal. It is legitimate to infer, from all available evidences that Śāntirakshita was a native

to Tibet in order to strengthen the cause of Buddhism there. Śāntirakshita went to Tibet. He had hardly preached there the Buddhist doctrine for four months when, we are told, the demi-gods of Tibet grew indignant and caused many phenomenal disturbances. Śāntirakshita was sent back to Nepal. Sometime afterwards he, on the request of the Tibetan king, went for a second time to Tibet. He introduced there the observance of the 'ten virtues' and Dharma. But the local gods, demi-gods, genii, and female spirits, finding the people inclined to Buddhism, became very violent again. They were evidently the adherents of the Bon religion. Śāntirakshita was not strong enough to cope with them. He advised the king to invite Padmasambhava, who knew mystic charms for combating the evil spirits. Padmasambhava, at the invitation of the king, went to Tibet, and within a very short period brought all the evil genii under his control. The king was highly pleased with Padmasambhava and Śāntirakshita, and built Bsam-ya, a monastery after the model of that at Odantapurī in Magadha (*supra* p. 115). Both the Indian teachers established there the order of the Lamas. Lama, in the true sense, means the head of the monastery, though in modern times the title is given to all the monks and priests in Tibet connected with the Buddhist order. The religion of the Lama is simply called "The Religion" or "Buddha's Religion." Its followers are called 'Nan-pa,' that is 'within the fold.' Padmasambhava and Śāntirakshita trained some Tibetans as monks, who carried on their mission assiduously, and translated many Buddhist texts into Tibetan. Padmasambhava, after a residence of a short period, left Tibet in order to preach Buddhism in other lands. Śāntirakshita was made the first abbot of the monastery at Bsam-ya. He occupied that position for thirteen years. Shortly before his death Hoshang Mahāyāna, a Chinese missionary, visited Tibet. He started preaching Buddhism of an order which differed from that advocated by Śāntirakshita. Śāntirakshita, failing to meet his opponent in contro-

of Bengal (*supra* p. 332). His sister was Mandaravā The tradition runs that Indrabhūti, a king of Uḍḍiyāna, had a son named Padmasambhava (Waddell, *op. cit.* 380-82). Padmasambhava in his early age was tyrannical. The king, in order to please his subjects, banished the prince. Padmasambhava in course of his travel reached Zahor, and married the sister of Śāntirakshita. Waddell identifies Uḍḍiyāna with Udyāna in the Swat Valley (*op. cit.* p. 26). According to *Pag Sam Jon Zang*, the first Siddhāchārya Lui-pā belonged to the fisherman caste of Uḍḍiyāna, and was in the service of the king of Uḍḍiyāna as a writer. He is referred to in the *Bstan-ḥgyur* as a Bengali (Cordier-*Cat.* II. 33). He composed some Bengali songs (*BGD.* 21). On this and other grounds it has been suggested that Uḍḍiyāna might have been situated in Bengal (*IHQ.* XI. 142-44). For other views *cf. supra* p. 333, f.n. 1.

versy, requested the king to invite his disciple, Kamalaśīla to Tibet. Kamala was residing in Magadha. But Śāntirakshita, shortly before Kamalaśīla's arrival in Tibet, died of an accident. Kamalaśīla defeated the Chinese missionary in a debate, and established the soundness of the doctrine preached by Śāntirakshita.

The Tibetan literature closely connects another Bengali teacher named Dīpaṅkara Śrījñāna, also known as Atīśa,[1] with the religious movement in Tibet. Dīpaṅkara was born in 980 A.D. in the royal family of Gauḍa at Vikramaṇipura in Baṅgala. He was known as Chandragarbha in his early age. His father was Kalyāṇaśrī and his mother was Prabhāvatī. While young, he learnt five minor sciences under the guidance of the great teacher Jetāri. He studied the important literature of the Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna schools. Rāhulagupta taught him the meditative science of the Buddhists in the Kṛishṇagiri monastery. Kṛishṇagiri, modern Kanheri, in the Bombay Presidency, was an important centre of the Buddhists. Chandragarbha received there the name of Guhyajñāna-vajra. At the age of nineteen he took the sacred vows in the Odantapurī-*vihāra* from the Mahāsaṅghika Āchārya Śīlarakshita, who gave him the name Dīpaṅkara Śrījñāna. Twelve years later, at the age of thirty-one, he was ordained as a Bhikshu. He received the vow of a Bodhisattva from Dharmarakshita. He intended to study Buddhism under the guidance of Chandrakīrti, the High Priest of Suvarṇadvīpa. Suvarṇadvīpa, which was a general name for Java and other islands in Eastern Archipelago, was at that time an important centre of Buddhism in the East. A merchant vessel, after several months' strenuous journey, brought him to that island. He studied there for twelve years, and returned to Magadha, visiting Tāmradvīpa (Ceylon) on his way. He was invited to the Vikramaśīla monastery (*supra* p. 115) by the king Mahīpāla. Dīpaṅkara assumed the post of the High Priest of the Vikramaśīla monastery at the request of king Nayapāla, son of Mahīpāla. Sthavira Ratnākara was at that time the chief of the monastery.

About the middle of the eleventh century A.D. Lha Lama Ye-śes-ḥod was the king of Tibet. He was a pious Buddhist. He intended to reform Buddhism in Tibet, which was debased by Tantric and Bon mysticism. He sent Rinchhen Zaṅ-po, the great Lochava, and Legs-pahi Śerab to India in order to

[1] Cf. *supra* pp. 334-35. Dīpaṅkara is mentioned as Phul-byuṅ in an inscription in Tibet (Francke, *op. cit.* II. 169). For the account that follows *Cf. IP.* 50-76; *Pag Sam Jon Zang*, II. 183 ff. (*Cf.* table of contents, xviii ff.); Francke, *op. cit.* 167, 169, 170.

invite some Indian scholars to Tibet.[1] Those two officers of the Tibetan king, in course of their sojourn, went to the Vikramaśīla monastery. They came to learn there that Dīpaṅkara was the best of the Buddhist scholars in Magadha. But realising that there was no chance of their request being complied with, they did not dare extend him their invitation to Tibet. They went back to their country and communicated to the king every thing they knew about the great Bengali teacher. The king despatched a Tibetan mission under Rgya-tson-gru Sengé, a native of Tag-tshal, in Tsang, to Vikramaśīla with rich presents to invite Dīpaṅkara to his country. Dīpaṅkara, on receipt of the invitation, replied to the Tibetan mission :

> "Then it seems to me that my going to Tibet would be due to two causes: first, the desire of amassing gold, and second, the wish of gaining sainthood by the loving of others; but I must say that I have no necessity for gold nor any anxiety for the second at present."

The Tibetans, thus having failed to achieve their end, went back to their country. About this time a great calamity befell the king of Tibet. He was taken prisoner by the king of Garlog in the frontier of Nepal. The king, shortly before his death in the enemy's prison, sent through his nephew and successor Chan Chūb the following message to Dīpaṅkara :

> "Lha Lama, the king of Tibet, has fallen into the hands of the Rājā of Garlog while endeavouring to collect gold for diffusing the religion of Buddha, and for the *Paṇḍit* himself. The *Paṇḍit* should therefore vouchsafe his blessings and mercy unto him in all his transformed existences. The chief aim of the king's life has been to take him to Tibet to reform Buddhism, but, alas that did not come to pass! With a longing look to the time when he could behold the *Paṇḍit's* saintly face, he resigned himself absolutely to the mercy of the three Holies.'

After the death of the king, Chan Chūb sent a Tibetan mission in charge of Tshul Khrim-gyalwa to Dīpaṅkara at Vikramaśīla with the deceased king's letter. It was also instructed, in case Dīpaṅkara refused to come, to invite a scholar next to him to Tibet.

Tshul Khrim-gyalwa, also known as Vinayadhara, formerly studied Buddhist literature in India for two years. He proceeded to Vikramaśīla with the mission, and met there unexpectedly his preceptor Gya-tson Sengé. The preceptor told him that the Tibetans had no influence there, and advised him not to disclose at once the object of his visit. Both of them saw Dīpaṅkara from time to time. Dīpaṅkara was very much moved when he heard the news of the

[1] Francke (*op. cit.* 169-71) points out that Ye-śes-hod was a king of Gu-ge (Goggadeśa, in Western Tibet) which included parts of Kunawar and Spyi-ti, and that it was not he, but one of his descendants, that invited Atiśa to his country.

king's death under tragic circumstance. He consented to pay a visit to Tibet after finishing his work in hand, to which he would have to devote a period of eighteen months. He advised the Tibetan monks to keep the matter secret. Once Vinayadhara and Gya-tson made an attempt to know the opinion of Ratnākara on the matter of Dīpaṅkara's visit to Tibet. Ratnākara discarded the idea with the remark,

"in the absence of Atīśa, no other *Paṇḍit* would be able to preserve the moral discipline of the monks here. He holds the key to many a monastery of Magadha. For these reasons we can ill afford to lose his venerable presence."

The day of Dīpaṅkara's departure for Tibet was drawing near. It was not, however, possible for him to leave the Vikramaśīla monastery without the permission of his chief, Ratnākara. Once he sought the permission of Ratnākara for leave to accompany Vinayadhara to many places of pilgrimages including Nepal. Ratnākara could, however, discover that Dīpaṅkara cherished an idea of visiting Tibet on that occasion. He eventually agreed to the proposal of Vinayadhara about Dīpaṅkara's visit to Tibet on condition that the venerable teacher should return to Vikramaśīla within three years. He remarked :

"without Atīśa India will be in darkness. He holds the key to many institutions. In his absence many monasteries will be empty. The looming signs prognosticate evil for India. Numerous Turushkas (Muhammadans) are invading India, and I am much concerned at heart. May you proceed to your country with your companions and with Atīśa to work for the good of all living beings there."

Dīpaṅkara started for Tibet, accompanied by Vinayadhara, Gya-tson, *Paṇḍit* Bhūmigarbha, and the Mahārāja Bhūmisaṅgha, the king of Western India, who was his disciple. Some Śaivas, Vaishṇavas, and Kāpilas, who did not like that Dīpaṅkara should preach Buddhism in Tibet, engaged some robbers to take his life as soon as he passed the border of India. The robbers, when they saw the saintly appearance of the teacher, could not raise their hands against him, and went away. As soon as Dīpaṅkara entered Nepal a local chief took fancy to a beautiful little table made of sandalwood, which was being carried by the venerable teacher. He set some brigands to rob him of it. But Dīpaṅkara, it is reported, averted the danger by some mystic charms. After this he paid his reverence to the temple of Ārya Svayambhū. Gya-tson unfortunately died there of fever. Dīpaṅkara was much moved by this calamity, as Gya-tson was his close companion, and was to serve him in Tibet as an interpreter *(lochava)*. At this time he wrote a note to king Nayapāla. He met Ananta-kīrti, king of Nepal, at Palpa, then called Palpoi-thaṅ. He presented the king with an elephant, and

the latter in gratitude laid the foundation of a monastery called Thaṅ-*vihāra*. His son Padmaprabha was ordained as monk by Dīpaṅkara. Padmaprabha accompanied the Bengal *Paṇḍit* to Tibet.

Dīpaṅkara was received by the officers and the army of the king Chan Chūb in the frontier of Tibet. He stopped on the bank of Mānasa-sarovara for a week. Finally he reached the monastery at Tholing[1] with his party. He was given a grand ovation by the king in the capital. He moved from province to province and preached Mahāyāna doctrine. Brom-ton, founder of the first great hierarchy of Tibet., became his disciple. Dīpaṅkara succeeded there in eliminating Tantric and foreign elements from the Buddhist creed. He wrote several books on Buddhism during his stay in Tibet. *Bodhipatha-pradīpa* is the most prominent among them.[2] The authorship of about two hundred books is ascribed to him.[3] He lived in Tibet for thirteen years and died there c. 1053 A.D. at the age of seventy-three. His memory is still cherished by the people of that country.

II. Activities of Bengalis in India outside Bengal

We have many references to Bengalis playing an important part, both in secular and religious affairs, in different parts of India outside Bengal. A short account of some of these persons is given below to indicate the nature and scope of these activities.

We may begin with Gadādhara who founded a principality in the Far South. Gadādhara was born in the village of Taḍā, in Varendrī. He is described as the crest-jewel of Gauḍa, and the illuminator of Varendrī. He proceeded to Southern India, and became the chief of the territory called Kārtikeya-tapovana. The seat of his government was Kolagala, the modern village of Kolagallu, in the Bellary district, Madras Presidency. He was a subordinate of the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Kṛishṇa III. (A.D. 939-967) and Khoṭṭiga (967-c. 972 A.D.). He installed the images of Sūrya, Brahmā, Vishṇu, Maheśvara, Pārvatī, Vināyaka, and Kārtikeya, and founded a monastery at Kolagallu.[4]

[1] It is identified with Totling *math* in Western Tibet (*PIHC*. Lahore 1940, p. 179).

[2] Cordier-*Cat*. II. 45 ff; *IP*. 76.

[3] P. N. Bose, *Indian Teachers of Buddhist Universities*, pp. 73-79; *IP*. 76.

[4] Kolagallu inscription (*EI*. XXI. 260-64); *IMP*. I. 265, No. 82; 266. Bellary No. 91. The name is wrongly read here as Gajādhara and Gaṇḍādhara.

The Gopeswar inscription of Anekamalla, dated Śaka 1113 (=1191 A.D.), refers to the king as sprung from the family of Gauḍa.[1] He was a king of the Garhwal district where the inscription was discovered, and is said to have conquered Kedāra-bhūmi, no doubt the holy city of Kedāra and the adjoining territory.

Another son of Gauḍa distinguished himself in the same region about the same time. He is Udayarāja, of the Gauḍa family, who was appointed commander of the Chāhamāna army by Pṛithvīrāja III. (1182-1192 A.D.). Pṛithvīrāja III defeated Muhammad Ghūrī in 1190-91 A.D., but lost his life in a battle with the same Muslim general at Tarāorī, near Karnal, in 1192 A.D. These informations are supplied by the Muhammadan historians. The *Hammīra-mahā-kāvya* gives a somewhat different account of the conflict. It records that Pṛithvīrāja fought successfully with Sāhābadina (Shihab-ud-din Muhammad Ghūrī) many times. On the last occasion the Muslim general, referred to as the king of the Śakas, invaded the kingdom of Pṛithvīrāja, and captured Dilli (Delhi). Pṛithvīrāja, commanding Udayarāja to follow him, hurried to oppose the enemy with a small army. He suffered defeat at the hand of Muhammad Ghūrī, and was taken prisoner, before Udayarāja could come to his assistance. Muhammad Ghūrī, after the arrival of Udayarāja in the battle-field, being dubious about his ultimate success, withdrew to the city of Delhi with the captive Pṛithvīrāja. The pride of his being a member of the Gauḍa family prevented Udayarāja from retracing his steps, leaving his master in that perilous condition. He made an onslaught on the city, and fought bravely with the enemy for a month without interval. A Muslim officer, apprehending grave danger, advised Muhammad Ghūrī to ease the situation by relasing Pṛithvīrāja. But Muhammad Ghūrī, in his rage, ordered the execution of the Chāhamāna king. Udayarāja, after the death of Pṛithvīrāja, in his despair made a desperate attempt to capture the city, and fell fighting in the battle.[2]

A Brāhmaṇa named Śakti, belonging to the Bharadvāja family of Gauda, obtained Darvābhisāra, which is now represented by the tract of the lower and the middle hills between the rivers Chandrabhāgā and Vitastā. His son was Mitra. Mitra's son was Śaktisvāmī. Śaktisvāmī became the minister of king Muktāpīḍa,[3] also known as

[1] Atkinson, *Notes on the History of the Himalaya of the North-Western Province of India*, Ch. IV. 16. The name of the king may also be read as Bhaneka Malla. There is a second inscription of the king on an iron trident in front of Gopeśvara Temple (*Ibid.* 17-18).

[2] *Hammira-mahākāvya* of Nayachandra Sūri, Canto III. vv. 65-73. (*Cf. IHQ.* XVI. 349).

[3] *Kāḍambari-kathā-sāra* by Abhinanda (Kāvyamālā, No. II), p. 2.

Lalitāditya, who ruled Kashmir from *c.* A.D. 725 to 760 (*supra* pp. 83-84).

Gadādhara, son of Lakshmīdhara, an ornament of the Gauḍa family, attained to the position of the great minister of peace and war under the Chandella king Paramardi (*c.* 1167-1202 A.D.). There was another personage named Lakshmīdhara, who was born in the Gauḍa family, and who was an ornament in the kingdom of the Chandella Kīrtivarman (*c.* A.D. 1098). Lakshmīdhara's son was Yaśaḥpāla, who was a minister under the next Chandella king Sallakshaṇavarman. Yaśaḥpāla's son Śrīdhara was an officer of the Chandella king Jayavarman (A.D. 1117). Śrīdhara's son Gokula was a minister of the Chandella Pṛithvīvarman. Gokula's son Bhoja (?) flourished during the reign of the Chandella Madanavarman (A.D. 1129-1163). Bhoja's son Mahīpāla was an officer under the Chandella Paramardi. Mahīpāla's son Gaṅgādhara became a favourite of the Chandella Trailokyavarman (A.D. 1205-*c.* 1247). Gaṅgādhara's son Jagaddhara was a minister of the Chandella Vīravarman (A.D. 1261-1286).[1]

An inscription of the fifth century A.D. mentions that a Kshatriya family from Gaura. founded a kingdom in the Udaipur State, Rājaputāna.[2] Gaura appears to be the same as Gauḍa, though this cannot be definitely proved.

The Bengalis in foreign land showed more zeal in religious and missionary activities than in any other sphere of life. Both Buddhist and Brahmanical teachers went far and near, and propagated their respective tenets.

The earliest Bengali Buddhist teacher to achieve distinction outside Bengal is Śīlabhadra (*supra* pp. 330-31), a member of the Brahmanical royal family of Samataṭa.[3] We are fortunate in getting a detailed account of his life from the contemporary Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang. Śīlabhadra, in his young age, travelled throughout India for acquiring special knowledge in Buddhist philosophy. He met Dharmapāla at Nālandā and received religious instruction from him. Dharmapāla, finding in him the qualities of a great man, ordained him as a monk. Śīlabhadra mastered the principles of Buddhism, and attained high efficiency in explaining the subtleties of the Śāstra. His fame as a great Buddhist scholar spread to foreign lands. A Brahman from South India, who was

[1] *EI.* I. 207, 214; *ASI.* 1935-36, p. 91. For the date and history of the Chandella kings, see *DHNI.* Vol. II, Ch. XI.

[2] *ASI.* 1929-30, p. 187.

[3] Watters, II. 109-110; *supra* pp. 85-86. Hiuen Tsang has recorded various interesting anecdotes about Śīlabhadra (cf. Beal-*Life.* 106-112, 121, 153, 160, 165).

proud of his learning, came to Magadha and challenged Dharmapāla for a religious discourse. Dharmapāla engaged Śīlabhadra, who was then only thirty years old, for initiating discussion with the Brahman. Śīlabhadra thoroughly outwitted his opponent, and succeeded in proving the soundness of his faith. The king of Magadha was highly pleased with Śīlabhadra for his achievement, and expressed his willingness to endow him with the revenue of a city. Śīlabhadra first refused the offer on the ground that a monk should not have any attraction for such a thing. But he had ultimately to accept the gift at the king's earnest request. He built a monastery and donated the above endowment for its maintenance.

In course of time Śīlabhadra became the chief minister of the community at Nālandā. At this time 'the priests, belonging to the convent, or strangers (*residing therein*) always reached to the number of 10,000.' They all studied Mahāyāna, the doctrines belonging to eighteen schools, the Vedas, Hetu-vidyā, Śabda-vidyā, Chikitsā-vidyā, Atharva-veda, and the Sañkhya (Sāṅkhya). Śīlabhadra was the only scholar who mastered all the collections of the Sūtras and the Śāstras. Hiuen Tsang reports that the members of the convent, from their great reverence to Śīlabhadra, did not venture to call him by his name, but gave him the appellation of *Ching-fa-tsong* ("Treasure of the Good Law").

When Hiuen Tsang arrived at Nālandā in 637 A.D. Śīlabhadra was the chief of the monastery. The pilgrim submitted to the teacher that he came from the country of China in order to learn the principles of Yoga-śāstra under his guidance. Śīlabhadra received Hiuen Tsang with great respect. Hiuen Tsang attended a series of lectures, delivered by the venerable teacher, on Yoga-śāstra. About this time Harsha Śīlāditya, at the request of Śīlabhadra, granted the revenues of three villages to a Brahman, who attended the above lectures along with the Chinese pilgrim.

Hiuen Tsang prepared a work entitled "*The Destruction of Heresy*," and handed it over to Śīlabhadra. Śīlabhadra received a letter from Kumāra, king of Kāmarūpa, requesting him to send the Chinese pilgrim to his kingdom. Śīlabhadra did not comply with this request, as he expected a similar invitation from Śīlāditya about the same time. Kumāra ultimately sent a threatening letter to Śīlabhadra. "If necessary," said he, "I will equip my army and elephants, and like the clouds sweep down on and trample to the very dust that monastery of Nālandā." Śīlabhadra, probably to get out of the unpleasant situation, sent Hiuen Tsang to Kāmarūpa. This happened about the beginning of 643 A.D.

We hear nothing more of Śīlabhadra. He was the greatest Buddhist teacher of his age. He commanded respect from every-

body. One of his works is known to us. It is entitled *Ārya-Buddha-bhūmi-vyākhyāna*, which was translated into Tibetan.

Śīlabhadra and Śāntirakshita, referred to above, were both teachers of the Nālandā monastery. Another Bengali teacher, whose name was Chandragomin (*supra* pp. 296-300, 330),[1] is known to have been connected with that institution. Chandragomin was born in a Kshatriya family in the east in Varendra. He studied *Sūtra-* and *Abhidharma-piṭakas* under the guidance of Āchārya Sthiramati. He mastered literature, grammar, logic, astronomy, music, fine arts, and the science of medicine. He was initiated into the Buddhist faith by Āchārya Aśoka, and became a great devotee of Avalokiteśvara and Tārā.

Chandragomin proceeded to Ceylon and Southern India. While residing in Southern India he wrote a grammar entitled *Chāndra-vyākaraṇa*, which was an improvement on Nāgaśesha's (Patañjali's) *Bhāshya* on Pāṇini's grammar. Next he proceeded to Nālandā where he met Chandrakīrti, who was at that time the High Priest of the monastery there. The priests of Nālandā did not give him a warm reception as he was only a lay disciple. But Chandrakīrti found in Chandragomin a great scholar, and succeeded in removing that unfriendly feeling from the minds of the host of priests. He arranged a procession of priests, which was headed by three chariots. He placed Chandragomin in one of them, an image of Mañjuśrī in the second, and himself in the third. After this event the priests paid great reverence to Chandragomin. Chandragomin, who was a follower of the Yogāchāra system, carried on philosophical discussions in the monastery. The story runs that he once threw off the grammar, which he wrote in South India, into a well, considering that it was inferior in merit to one prepared by Chandrakīrti. But at the instance of Tārā, who told him in dream about the superior quality of his work, he recovered the book from the well.

Chandragomin wrote a book on logic known as *Nyāya-siddhy-āloka*, the Tibetan translation of which is now available. His Tibetan name is Zla-wa-dge-bsnen.

The Bengali *Paṇḍit*, most highly esteemed in Tibet, is Abhayākaragupta (*supra* pp. 334-35).[2] He is worshipped there as one of the Panchhen-Rinpochhes *i.e.* Lamas possessing royal dignities. He was born at a place near the city of Gauḍa, in Eastern India. In his young age he went to Magadha, in Madhyadeśa, and learnt there

[1] The account of the Buddhist teachers, given below, is based on Tibetan tradition. For Chandragomin *cf.* S. C. Vidyabhusana, *Hist. Ind. Logic*. 121-23.; *Tar.* 146-158; *Pag Sam Jon Zang*, 95-96; *JASB.* N. S. III. No. 2; *IA.* IX. 178.

[2] *JASB.* LI. Part I. pp. 16-18; *Sādhana-mālā*, II. Introd. pp. xc-xci.

five sciences. Within a very short time he earned renown as a great Buddhist scholar. He became a priest in the palace of Rāmapāla, who is described as the king of Magadha in the Tibetan literature. It is reported that he wrote Śāstras during the first two watches of the day, explained Dharma in the third watch, worshipped his gods till midnight in the Himavana cemetery, and retired to bed after that. He gave relief to many hungerstricken beggars in the city of Sukhavatī. It was due to his intervention that a Chaṇḍāla king of the city of Charasiṁha gave up the project of sacrificing one hundred men. He furthered the cause of Buddhism. In his later life he became the High Priest of the Vikramaśīla monastery, which accommodated three thousand monks. He was the head of the Mahāyāna sect in the Odantapurī monastery. It is reported that when Abhayākara was residing in the Vikramaśīla monastery under the protection of the son of king Śubhaśrī of Eastern India, a Turuskha war took place. Abhayākara performed many religious rites as the result of which, it is said, the Turuskhas were forced to leave India. He died before Rāmapāla's abdication of the throne. He is said to have been succeeded to the position of the High Preist of Vikramaśīla monastery by Ratnākara-śānti. It is, however, known from another Tibetan source that Ratnākara-śānti preceded him to that post. Abhayākara was a great writer. He translated many books into the Tibetan language. It is not known whether he ever visited Tibet.

Other Bengali scholars, who were closely connected with the Vikramaśīla monastery, were Jetāri and Jñānaśrī-mitra. They were senior contemporaries of Dīpaṅkara Śrījñāna.

Jetāri[1] (*supra* p. 334) was a resident of Varendra. His father Garbhapāda, a Brahman *āchārya*, was the religious teacher of Sanātana, who is described as the king of Varendra by Tāranātha. Sanātana was probably a vassal of king Mahīpāla I. In his young age Jetāri was expelled by his relations. This incident turned the course of his life. He became a devotee of Buddha. He studied the Buddhist doctrine, and became thoroughly conversant with *Abhidharma-piṭaka*. King Mahā-(ī)pāla conferred on him the diploma of '*Paṇḍita*' of the Vikramaśīla monastery. He served there as a professor for a long time. Ratnākara-śānti and Dīpaṅkara Śrījñāna, who became High Priests of Vikramaśīla monastery, were his pupils. He wrote many books on Tantra and Sūtra. Tāranātha reports that he was the author of one hundred books. Many of his works have been translated into Tibetan. He was known in Tibet as Dgra-las-rgyal-wa.

[1] *Tar.* 230-33; *Pag Sam Jon Zang,* 116; S. C. Vidyabhusana, *op. cit.* 186.

Jñānaśrī[1] (*supra* p. 335), who was also known as Jñānaśrīmitra, was a native of Gauḍa. According to Dr. S. C. Vidyabhusana, he is probably the same as Jñānaśrī-bhadra, who carried on activities in Kashmir. He was one of the gate-keepers (guardians) of the Vikramaśīla monastery. Ratnavajra and Ratnākara-śānti were his colleagues. Dīpaṅkara, in his early age, studied Buddhism under his guidance. He was a contemporary of king Chanaka (Sanātana ?). He has written many books on logic and other subjects. Most of them have been translated into Tibetan language. He is known in Tibet as Yeses-dpal-bases-gnen.

With the decline of Buddhism in the twelfth century A.D. Śaivism became predominant in Bengal. During this period some Bengali Śaiva teachers went to North and South India, and exercised considerable influence over the kings and the people there. The earliest known among them is Umāpatideva,[2] who bore another name Jñāna-Śivadeva. He was a native of Dakshiṇa-Rāḍhā, in Gauḍa-deśa. He settled in the Chola country, and acquired great renown for his divine qualities. He was known there as Svāmidevar. He was a contemporary of Rājādhirāja II (A.D. 1163-1190), successor of Rājarāja II on the Chola throne. In the third quarter of the twelfth century A.D. the Ceylonese army, under their generals Jayadratha, Laṅkāpurī and others, conquered the Pāṇḍya country, and forced the Pāṇḍya Kulaśekhara to flee away from Madura. Thereafter they attacked the feudatories of Rājādhirāja, and threatened to invade the districts of Toṇḍi and Pāśi. The people in the Chola country got panick-stricken. Ediriḷi-Śoḷa-Śambuvarāyan, a feudatory of Rājādhirāja, prayed to Umāpatideva for offering oblation and worship to the great god for their safety. Umāpatideva worshipped Śiva for a period of twenty-eight days, as the result of which, it is said, the Ceylonese army with its generals fled away from the Chola country. Ediriḷi-Śola-Śambuvarāyan, as a token of gratitude, granted the village of Arpakkam to Umāpatideva. Umāpatideva distributed the income of that village among his relations.

The Śaiva teacher Viśveśvara-śambhu[3] exercised still greater influence on the thought and culture of the people of the Deccan. He was a resident of Pūrvagrāma, in Dakshiṇa-Rāḍhā, in Gauḍa.

[1] *Tar.* 235-42; *Pag Sam Jon Zang.* 117-20; Vidyabhusana, *op. cit.* 137.

[2] Tiruvalīśvara Temple inscription, at the village of Arpakkam, in the Conjeeveram *tāluk* of the Chingleput district, Madras (*IMP.* I. 353, *CG.* No. 248; D. C. Ganguly, *Eastern Cālukyas*, p. 140).

[3] Malkapuram Stone Pillar Ins. The pillar stands in front of the ruined temple of Viśveśvara, at Malkapuram, Guntur *tāluk* in the Guntur district, Madras (*JAHRS.* IV. 158-62; *IMP.* II. 938, No. 316).

He rose to the position of the chief teacher in the famous Golakī *maṭha*, in the Ḍāhala-*maṇḍala*, situated between the Narmadā and Bhāgīrathī. Ḍāhala-*maṇḍala* was the country round the modern town of Jubbulpore in the Central Provinces. This Golakī *maṭha* was founded by Durvāsas. Sadbhāva-śambhu, a remote successor of Durvāsas to the position of the High Priest of that *maṭha*, received three *lakhs* of villages as a gift from the Kalachuri king Yuvarāja I (*c.* A.D. 925), and dedicated it to the *maṭha* for its maintenance. In the line of Sadbhāva-śambhu flourished the teachers Soma-śambhu, Vimala-śambhu, Śakti-śambhu, Kīrti-śambhu, Vimala-śiva of the Kerala country, and Dharma-śambhu. Dharma-śambhu's successor was Viśveśvara-śambhu of Bengal, who flourished in the middle of the thirteenth century A.D. Viśveśvara-śambhu was a great Vedic scholar. The Choḷa and Mālava kings were his disciples. He was the *dīkshā-guru* (preceptor for initiation) of the Kākatīya king Gaṇapati (A.D. 1213-1249) of Warangal, and of a king of the Kalachuri dynasty of Tripurī. Gaṇapati is stated to have been his (spiritual) son. Viśveśvara-śambhu lived in the court of Gaṇapati. It offered a pleasing sight when he, with his gold-coloured matted hair, pendent ear-ornaments, and brilliant face, took his seat in the open Hall of Learning of Gaṇapati. Gaṇapati expressed his desire to grant the village of Mandara, situated in the Kaṇḍravāṭi, in the Velināḍa-*vishaya*, on the south bank of the Krishṇaveṇī (Krishna) river, to his preceptor. His daughter and successor Rudrāmba granted, in Śaka 1183 (=1261 A.D.), that village along with the village of Velaṅgapuṇḍi, and the *laṅkā* lands, in the Krishṇaveṇī river, to the Śaiva teacher. Viśveśvara-śambhu amalgamated the two villages, thus granted to him, into one, and named it Viśveśvara-Golakī. He founded there a temple, a monastery, a college, a *chaultry* for distribution of food, a maternity home, and a hospital. He settled there sixty families of Drāviḍa Brāhmaṇas, and granted them altogether 120 *puttis* of lands for their maintenance. They were given full power to dispose of these lands in any way they liked. The remaining lands were divided into three parts. The income of one part was granted for the maintenance of the temple of Śiva, the income of the second was allotted for meeting the expenditure of the college and the Śaiva monastery, and that of the third was reserved for meeting the expenditure of the maternity home, the hospital, and the feeding-house. Altogether eight professors,—three for teaching Vedas, *viz.*, *Ṛig*, *Yajur*, and *Sāma*, and five for teaching logic, literature, and Āgama—were appointed for the college. One very able physician and one expert clerk were appointed, apparently for the hospitals. Ten dancing-women, eight drummers including two pipers, one Kashmirian (music teacher?),

fourteen songstresses and *Karaḍā* drummers were employed for the temple. Two Brahman cooks, four servants, and six Brahman attendants were engaged for the monastery and the feeding-house. Ten village-guards, belonging to the Chola country, and known as Vīrabhadras, whose duty was to cut the scrotums, the heads and stomach, were employed. The duty of the Vīrabhadras, mentioned above, cannot be properly explained. There were twenty Vīra-mushṭis, who were *bhaṭas* or police-officers. The village was provided with a goldsmith, a coppersmith, a stone-cutter, a bamboo-worker, a potter, a blacksmith, an architect, a carpenter, a barber, and an artisan. Some Brahmans of the Śrīvatsa-*gotra* and *Sāma-veda*, who were natives of Pūrvagrāma in Dakshiṇa-Rāḍhā of Gauḍa, were appointed to supervise the income and expenditure of the village, and to keep an account of them in writing.

All the employees, referred to above, were granted lands for their maintenance. Their sons and grandsons *etc.* were given the right of ownership of these lands. Some lands were granted for meeting the expenses of the food and clothing of the Śaiva ascetics, Kālānana (Kālamukha), Pāśupatas, and the students, and also for meeting the cost of supplying food to all, irrespective of caste, who came to the village. Viśveśvara-śambhu laid down that the Golakī line would be appointing an *Āchārya*, who would be in charge of all the charitable establishments of the village *viz.*, the temple, the feeding-house, and the monastery. The *Āchārya* must possess the required qualifications, *viz.* he must be a virtuous and a learned Brahman, well conversant with Śaivism and its mysteries. He would be drawing in return for his service one hundred *nishkas* as his fee. The whole Śaiva community of the village was given the power of appointing a new *Āchārya* if the existing one was found negligent in his duty or was guilty of misbehaviour

Some other benevolent activities of Viśveśvara-śambhu are known to us besides those mentioned above. He founded a monastery known as Upala in the city of Kālīśvara, and making the village of Ponna an *agrahāra*, granted it for the maintenance of the monastery. He installed a *liṅga*, and founded a monastery after his own name in the city of Mandrakūṭa, and donated Manepalli and Uttupīlla for their maintenance. He installed a *liṅga* in the city of Chandravalli, and having extended the boundary of a pond, gave half of it to the deity. He founded a city called Viśveśvara in Ānandapada, and having installed Ānanda (Śiva) and a monastery, granted the city for the maintenance of the god. He set up a *liṅga* after his own name, and donated the village of Kommu for its maintenance. In Īśvarapurī on the north-east of Śrīśaila, he erected a monastery with sixteen surrounding walls, for the maintenance of

the feeding-house of which his disciple king Gaṇapati donated a village. This disciple granted him Kaṇḍrakoṭa in Pallināḍa as a fee to his preceptor. The latter installed a *liṅga* in Nivṛitta, and gave it the dry land adjacent to Vellāla, part of the forest of the village Dudyāla, and the whole village of Pūnūru. He set up a *liṅga* in the northern Somaśila, and donated it the village of Aitaprol. In Śaka 1172=A.D. 1250, he made some gift of gold to the temple of Tripurāntakeśvara, in the Markupura *tāluk* of the Karnul district, Madras Presidency. Three years later, the central shrine of this temple was erected by his son Śānta-śambhu, under orders of king Gaṇapati.[1]

Viśveśvara-śambhu's activities in the Andhra country reveal to us the nature of the cultural and civic conceptions of the Bengalis in the early times. And we know of a few more Bengalis who carried on similar activities in other parts of India.

Avighnākara, an inhabitant of Gauda, visited Western India in the middle of the ninth century A.D. Krishṇagiri, modern Kanheri, in the Bombay Presidency, was, at that time, under Kapardin, a chief of Koṅkan, who was a subordinate of the Rāshṭrakūṭa Amoghavarsha I. Avighnākara excavated in the hill there a great monastery for the residence of monks. In Śaka 775=A.D. 853, he made a gift of one hundred *drammas*, from the interest of which the monks residing there were to be provided with clothes after his death.[2] A Bengali also perhaps made some contribution to the famous Kailāsa temple at Ellora.[3]

Vasāvaṇa, a famous Brahman of the Vatsa-bhārgava *gotra* from Gauḍa, settled at Siṁhapallī, in the Hariyāṇa country (modern Hariyāna in the Hissar district, Punjab). His eldest son Īśānaśiva forsook the world, proceeded to Vodāmayūtā (modern Badāun, United Provinces), and lived in a well-known Śaiva monastery there. He received initiation from Mūrtigaṇa, the chief of the monastery. In course of time Īśānaśiva himself became the chief of that monastery. He was a contemporary of the local Rāshṭrakūṭa ruler Amritapāla. He founded a temple of Śiva and donated for its maintenance the revenues of Bhadaṇaulikā.[4]

[1] *IMP.* II, *KL.* No. 262.

[2] *IA.* XIII. 133.—Inscription, found on the architrave of the verandah of the Darbar or Mahārājā's Cave (No. 10) at Kanheri.

[3] A rock-cut inscription from Kailāsa at Ellora runs:—"(The gift) of Lakshmī sporting in water and Udadhichaṇḍa (a *gaṇa* of Śiva) by Bhadrāṅkura of the Rādhe family (*Rādhe-kula*)" (Burgess, *Ins. Cave Temples of W. India*, p. 97). Rāḍhe may be taken as identical with Rāḍhā.

[4] *EI.* I. 61, 63.

Bengalis are also known to have achieved high distinction outside Bengal in the domain of literary art. It has been mentioned above (p. 678) that a Bengali, named Śaktisvāmī, became the minister of Lalitāditya of Kashmir. His son was Kalyāṇasvāmī, who has been compared with Yājñavalkya. Kalyāṇasvāmī's son was Kāntaśchandra, whose son was Jayanta. Jayanta is identified with Jayantabhaṭṭa, the author of *Nyāya-mañjarī*. Jayanta was a poet and had also the gift of eloquence. He acquired thorough knowledge in Veda, Vedāṅga, and all other Śāstras. His son was Abhinanda, who is the author of *Kādambarī-kathāsāra*. The book gives in verse the brief outline of the prose composition, named *Kādambarī*, by Bāṇabhaṭṭa.[1]

Lakshmīdhara, a native of the village of Bhaṭṭa-Kośala in Gauḍa, was a well-known poet. He went to Mālava, and lived in the court of the Paramāra king Bhoja (A.D. 1000-1055). He is the author of a Mahākāvya entitled *Chakrapāṇi-vijaya*.[2]

Halāyudha, a resident of Navagrāma, in Dakshiṇa-Rāḍhī(ā), seems to have settled in Mālava. He composed sixty-four verses, in V.S. 1120=A.D. 1063, which are found engraved in the temple of Amareśvara in Māndhātā (Nimar district, Central Provinces).[3]

Madana, who was born of a family of Gauḍa, was a poet of outstanding merit. In his early years he went to Mālava, and learnt the art of poetry from the great Jaina scholar Āśādhara. He obtained the title of *Bāla-sarasvatī* in recognition of his poetic genius. He rose to the position of the preceptor of the Paramāra king Arjunavarman (A.D. 1210-1218), a remote successor of Bhoja. He wrote a drama entitled *Pārijāta-mañjarī* (also called *Vijayaśrī*) commemorating the victory of Arjunavarman over Jayasiṁha, king of Gujarat. He also composed three inscriptions, belonging to Arjunavarman's reign.[4]

Gadādhara, mentioned above (p. 679), and his two sons Devadhara and Dharmadhara were poets in the court of the Chandella king Paramardi.[5]

Rāmachandra Kavibhāratī was a native of the village Vīravatī, in Gauḍa. In his early age he became thoroughly conversant with

[1] *Kādambarī-kathāsāra*, Kāvyamālā No. 11, *sarga*, I. vv. 7-18.

[2] *IC*. I. 703-704.

[3] *Descriptive List of Inscriptions in the C.P. and Berar* by Rai Bahadur Hiralal, First Ed., p. 72; Bhandarkar's *List*, No. 138. Hiralal refers the date to Vikrama Saṁvat. Mr. J. C. Ghosh thinks that it is in Śaka era and identifies Navagrāma with a village of the same name in Hooghly district (*IC*. I. 502).

[4] D. C. Ganguly, *Hist. of the Paramāra Dynasty*, 295; *JAOS*. VII. 25. 33; *JASB*. V. 378; *EI*. VIII. 101 ff.

[5] *EI*. I. 207, 214.

Tarka, Vyākaraṇa, Śruti, Smṛiti, Mahākāvya, Āgama, Alaṅkāra, Chhanda, Jyotisha, and Nāṭaka. He went to Ceylon during the reign of king Parākramabāhu II (*c.* 1225-60 A.D.).[1] He became a pupil of Rāhula, the well-known Buddhist scholar of Ceylon, and through the influence of the latter embraced Buddhism. The king Parākramabāhu II conferred on him the title of *Bauddhāgama-chakravartī*. Rāmachandra wrote three books in Ceylon, *viz.*, *Bhakti-śataka*, *Vṛitta-mālā*, and *Vṛitta-ratnākara-pañchikā*. *Vṛitta-ratnākara-pañchikā* was completed in the Buddha Era 1799=A.D. 1245.[2]

The Gauḍa Karaṇa-Kāyasthas (*supra* pp. 585-86) were proficient in Sanskrit language and were expert scribes. They lent their services to various ruling dynasties for writing *praśastis*. The Aphsaḍ inscription[3] of Ādityasena (A.D. 672), king of Magadha, was written by Sūkshma-śiva, a native of Gauḍa. An inscription[4] of the time of Chandellas from Khajurāho (A.D. 954) was written in pleasing letters by the Karaṇika Jaddha, the Gauḍa. Jaddha is said to have attained proficiency in Sanskrit language. The Dewal *praśasti* (A.D. 992),[5] in the Pilibhit district (United Provinces), was written by Takshāditya, a Karaṇika from Gauḍa, who knew the Kuṭila alphabet. The Kiṇsariyā inscription (A.D. 999)[6] of the time of the Chāhamāna Durlabharāja of Śākambharī was written by Mahādeva, a native of Gauḍa. The Nāḍol inscription (A.D. 1141)[7] of the Chāhamāna Rāyapāla was written by the Ṭhakura Pethaḍa, a Kāyastha of the Gauḍa lineage. The Delhi-Siwalik Pillar inscription (A.D. 1163)[8] of the Chāhamāna Vīsaladeva was written by Śrīpati, a Kāyastha of Gauḍa descent. The Peṇḍrābandh Plates of the Kalachuri king Pratāpamalla (1214 A.D.) were engraved by Pratirāja of the Gauḍa family who is described as the ocean of learning and the light (*i.e.* chief) of Karaṇa (office or caste).[9]

This brief outline, based only on what is definitely known of the activities of some of the glorious sons of Bengal outside the land of their birth, throws interesting light on the part they played in the bigger cultural life of the Indians, both in and outside India.

[1] For the date cf. *Suvarṇadvipa*. I. 198, f.n. 1.

[2] *IA*. 1930, p. 27. The date is given here as Buddha Era 1999, obviously a misprint for 1799.

[3] *CII*. III. 208. [4] *EI*. I. 122. [5] *Ibid*. 81.

[6] *Ibid*. XII. 61. [7] *Ibid*. XI. 41. [8] *IA*. XIX. 218.

[9] *EI*. XXIII. 6, 8.

We have seen them holding prominent positions, political and spiritual, establishing monasteries and temples, reforming religions and writing sacred and secular texts, founding educational institutions and hospitals, and contributing in various ways to the lustre of the courts of different kings by their intellectual pursuits. Everywhere they held their position with honour and dignity, and gave practical demonstration of the ideal and vision of the cultural unity of India.

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[Exigencies of space have necessitated omission in the Index of such broad geographical expressions recurring frequently in the text as Gauda, Magadha, Pundravardhana, Rādhā, Vanga and Varendra.—Abbreviations used are *a* (author), *amb* (ambassador), *art.* (artist), *br.* (Brahmin), *cap.* (capital), *cerm.* (ceremony), *ch.* (chief), *co.* (country), *comm.* (commentary, commentator), *dyn.* (dynasty), *emp.* (emperor), *excvs.* (excavations), *f.* (female), *fest.* (festival), *feud* (feudatory), *gen.* (general), *illustn.* (illustration), *isl* (island), *k* (king), *leg.* (legendary), *lex.* (lexicon, lexicographer), *loc* (locality), *m.* (male), *min.* (minister), *myth.* (mythical), *p.* (poet), *peo.* (people), *pers.* (person), *phys.* (physician), *prcs.* (princess), *q.* (queen), *sac.* (sacrifice), *sch.* (scholar), *suz.* (suzerain), *t.* (teacher), *to.* (town), *trvlr.* (traveller), *vill.* (village)]

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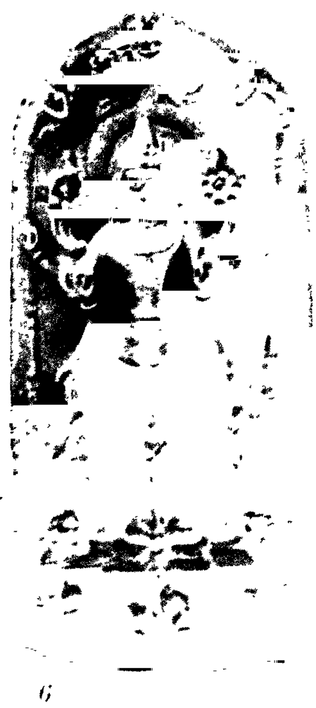

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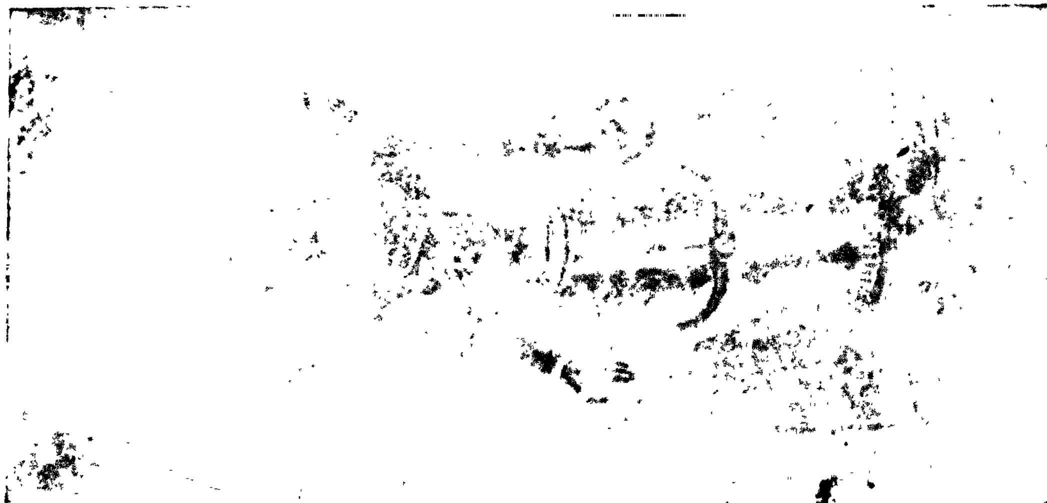

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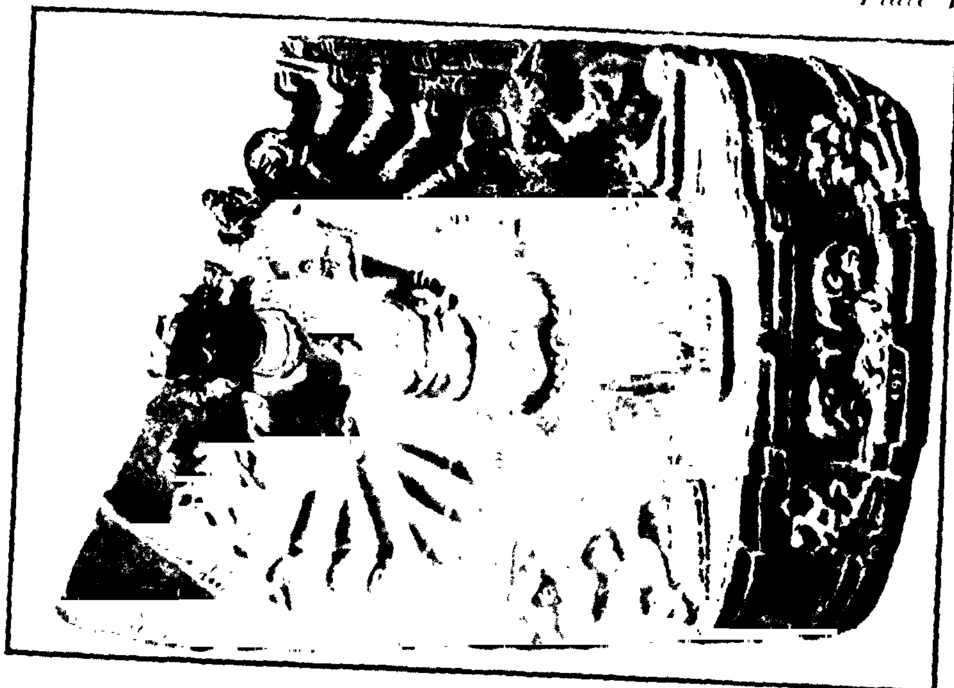

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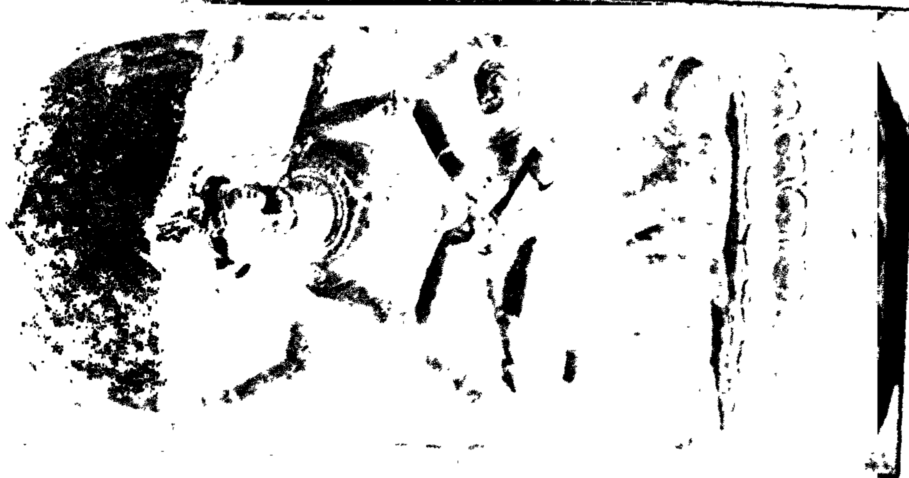




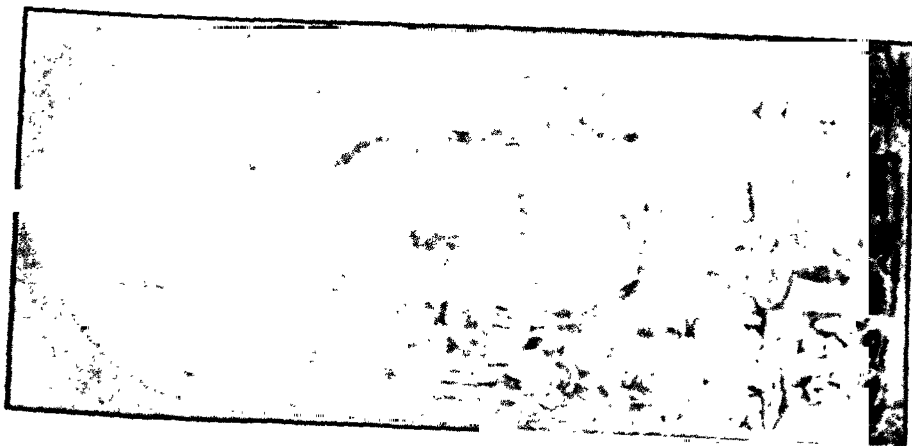




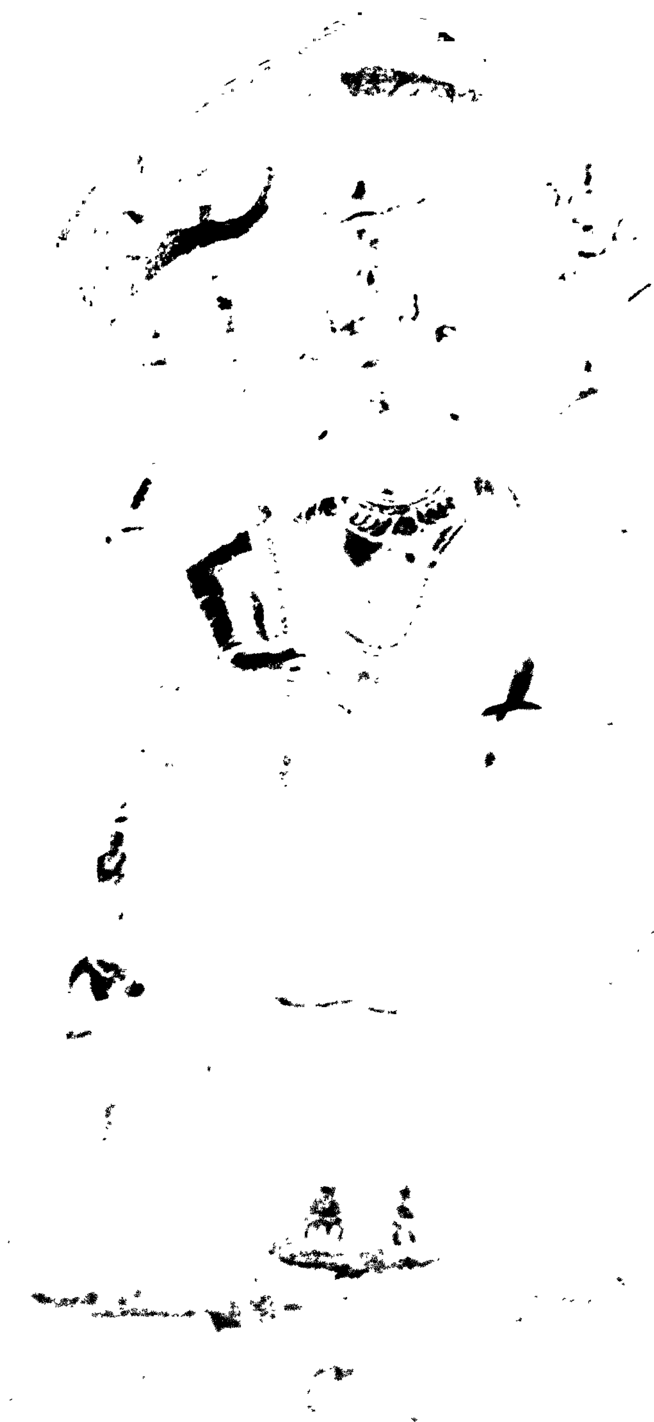
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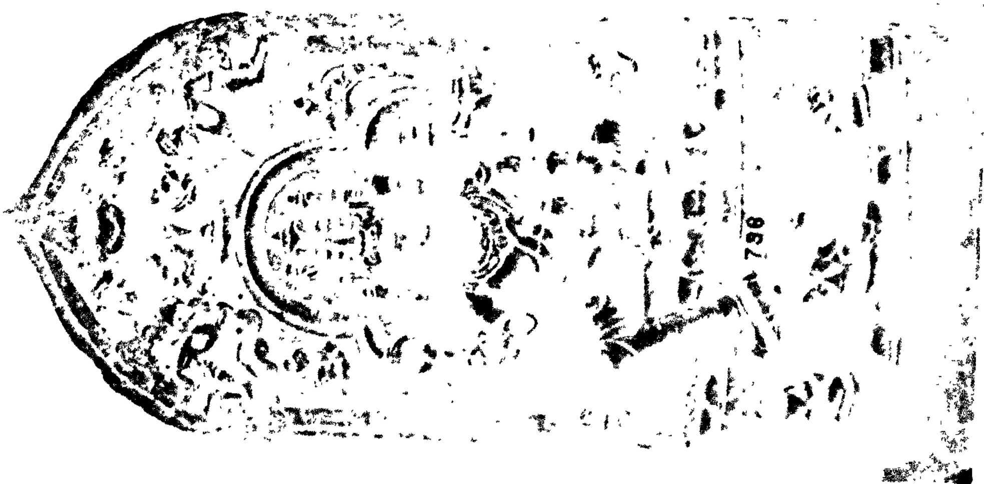
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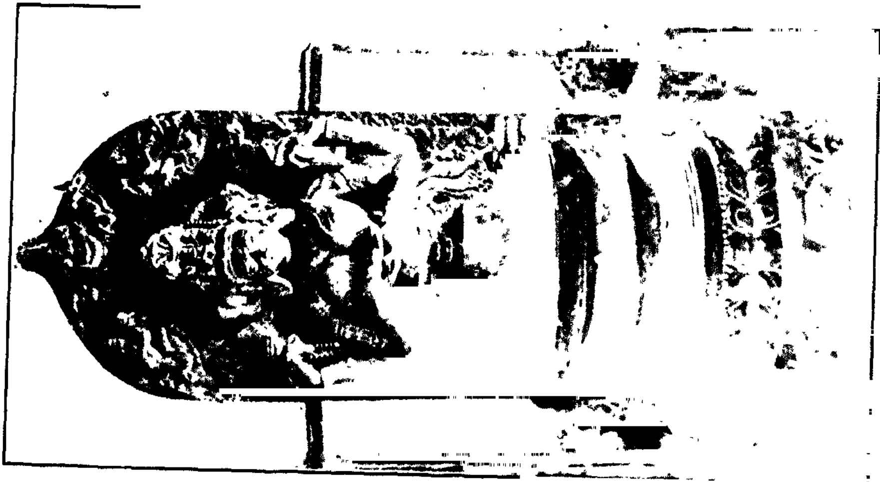


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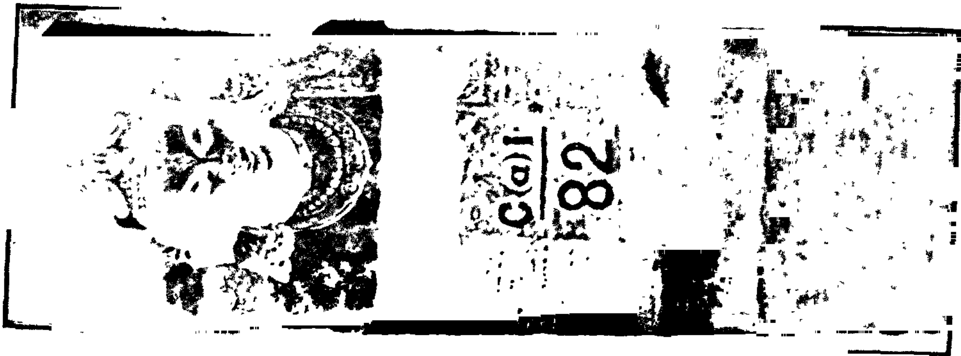


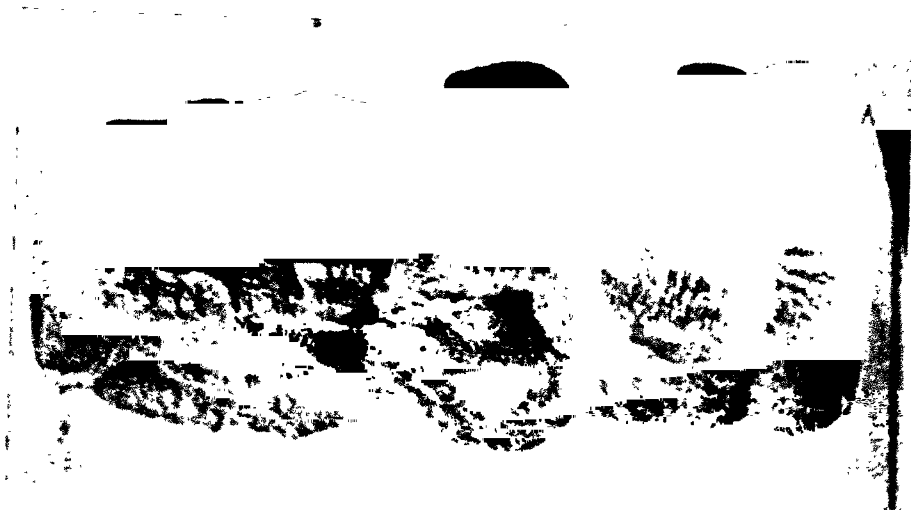
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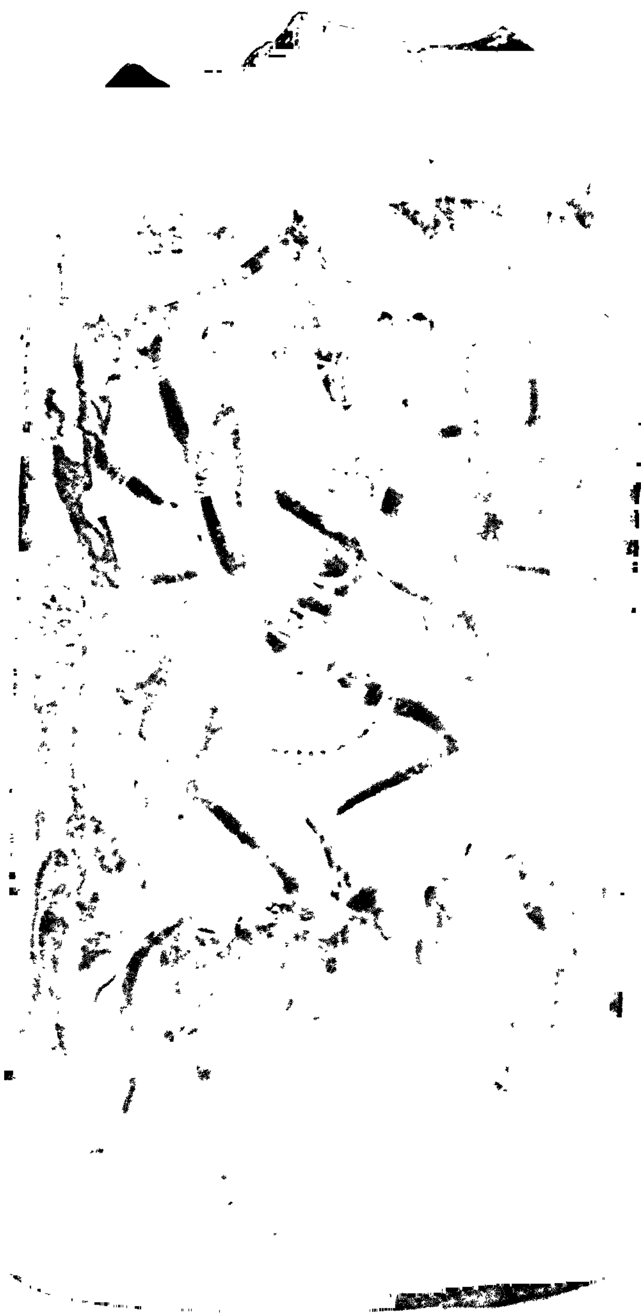


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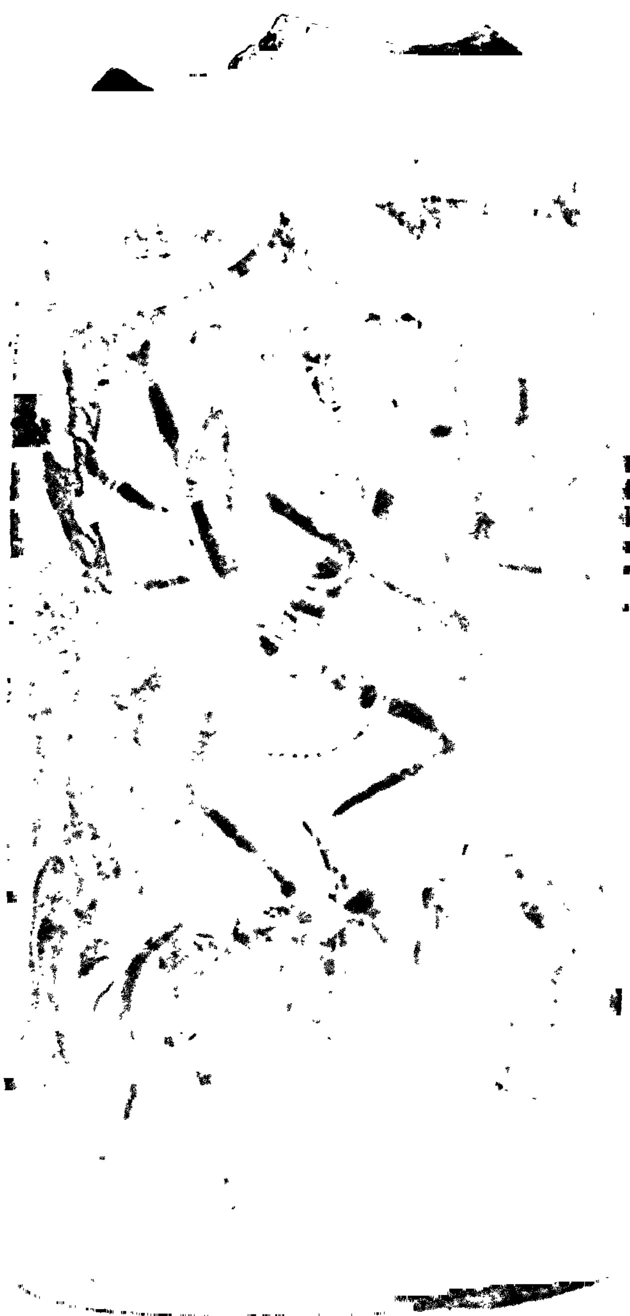


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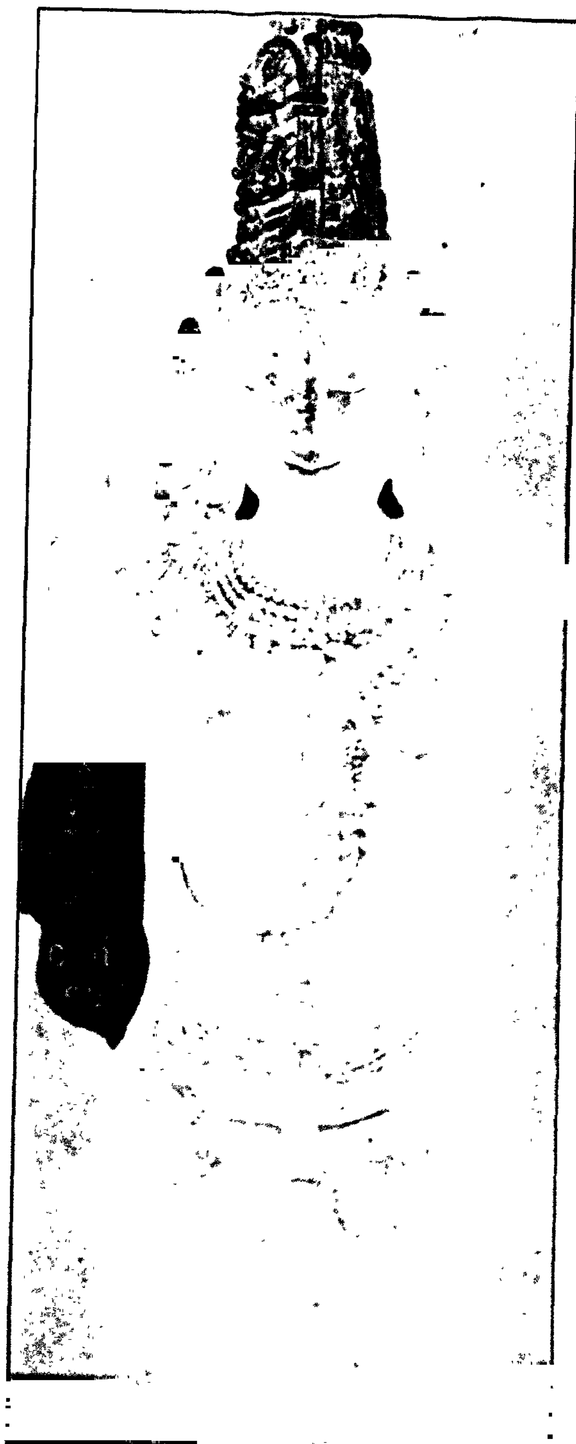




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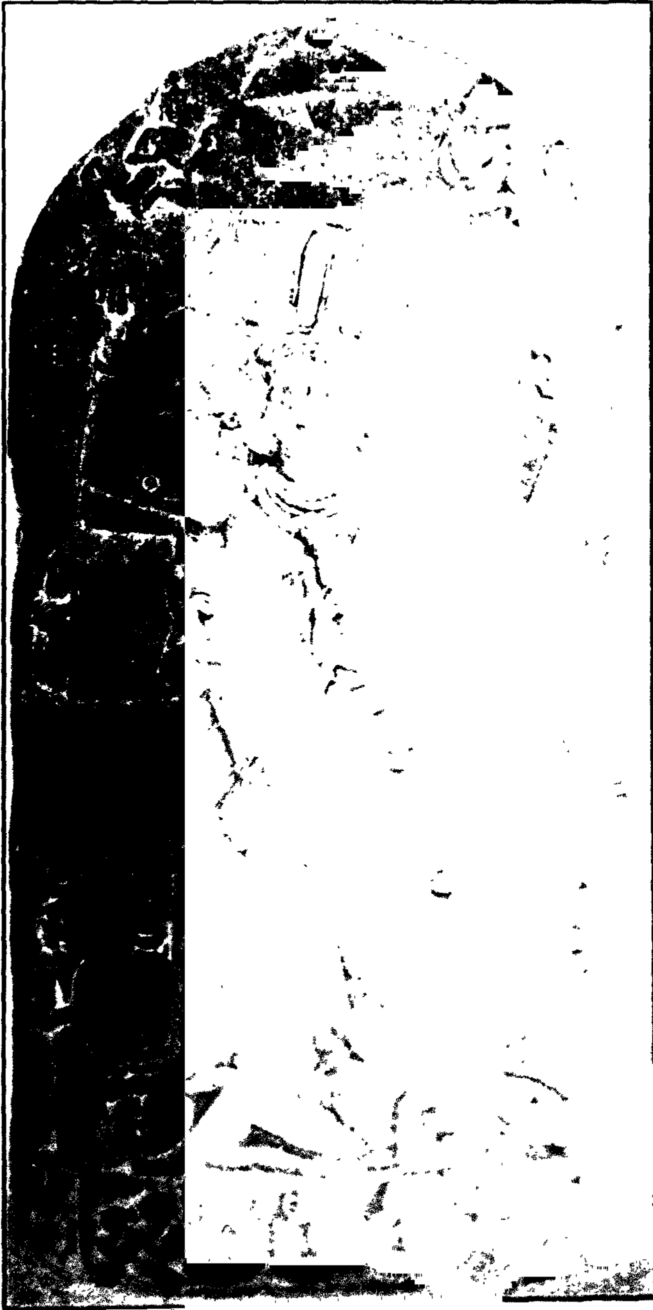
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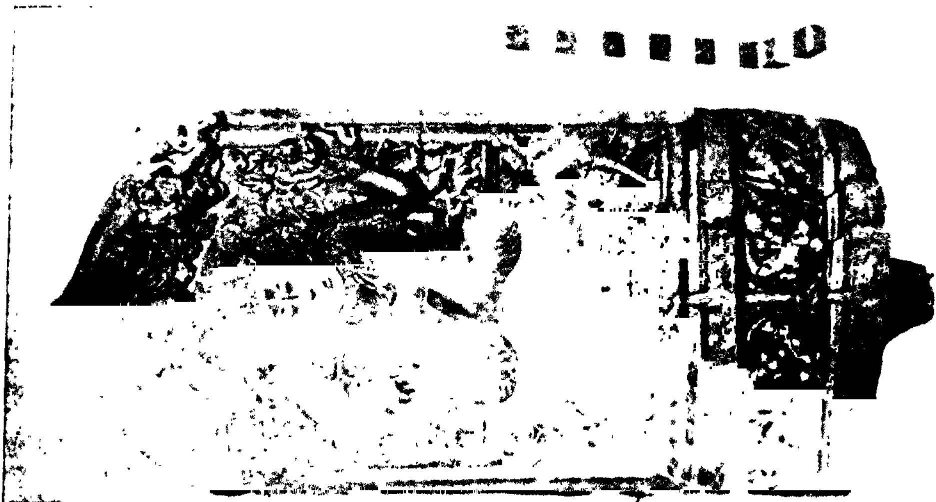
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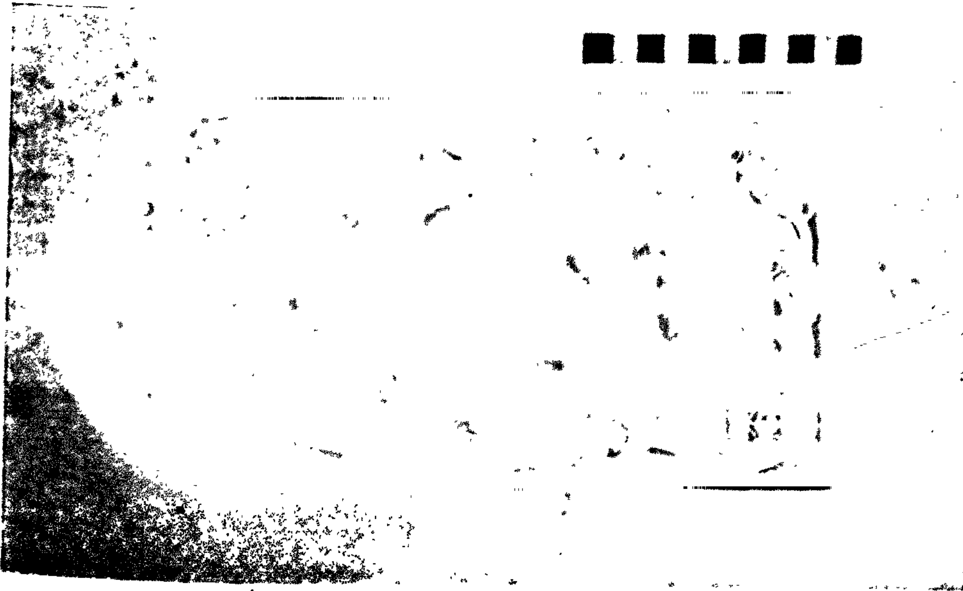


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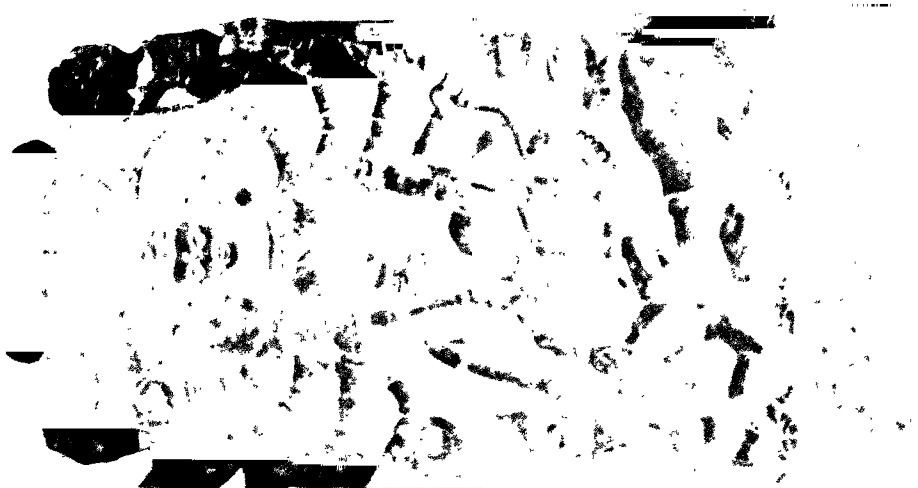
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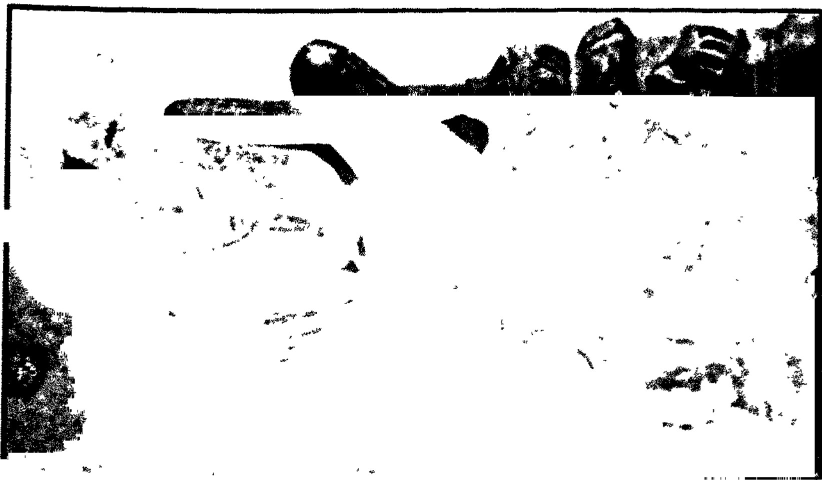










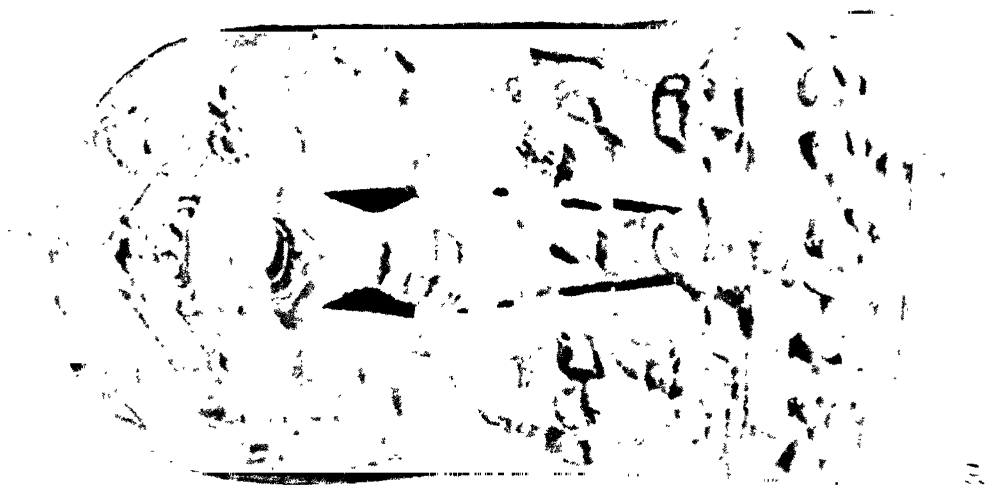


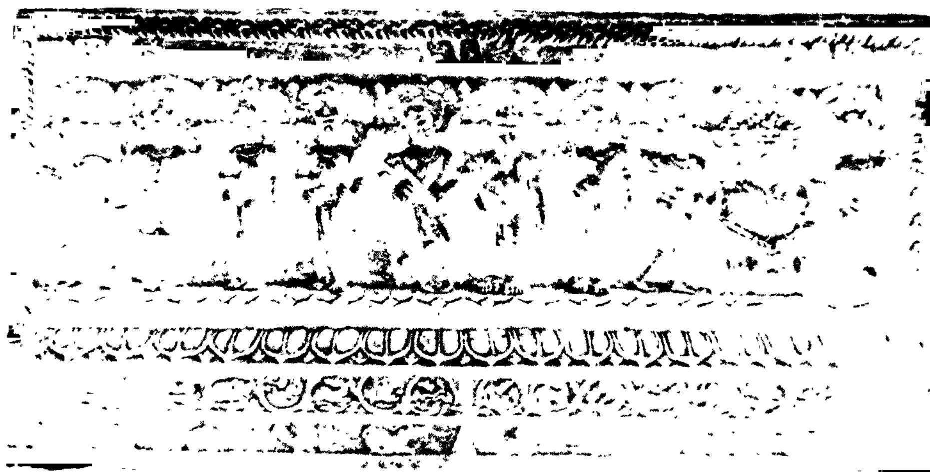


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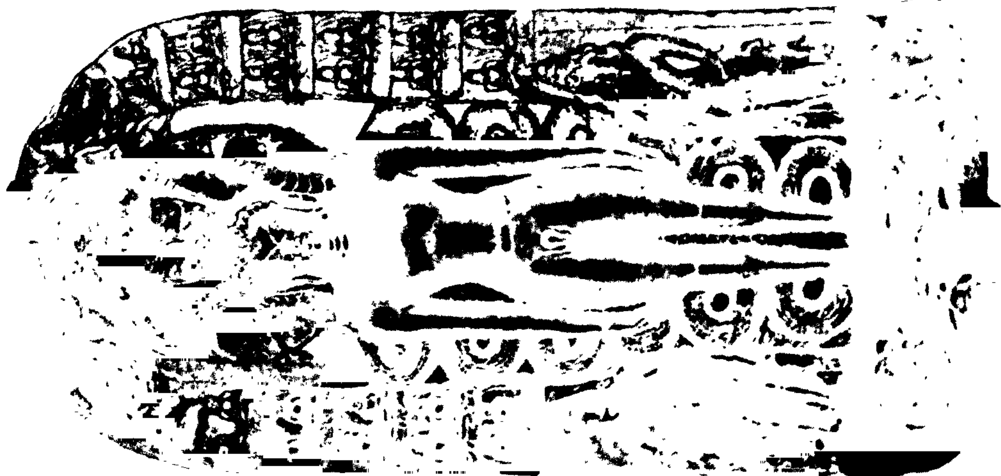
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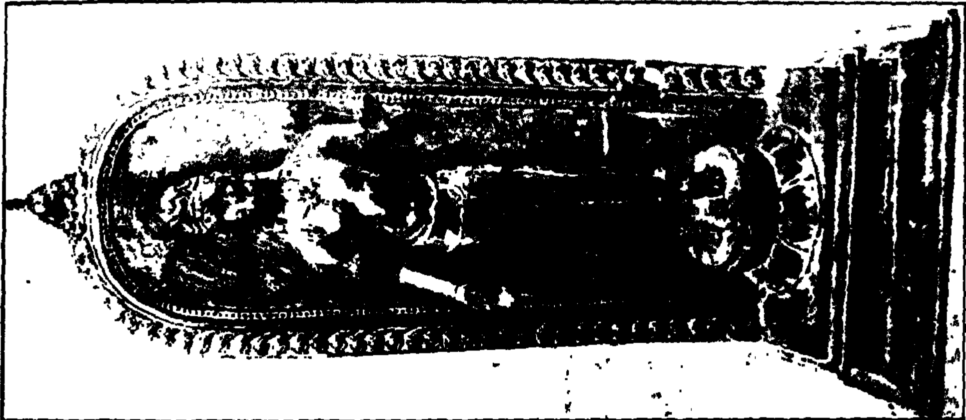
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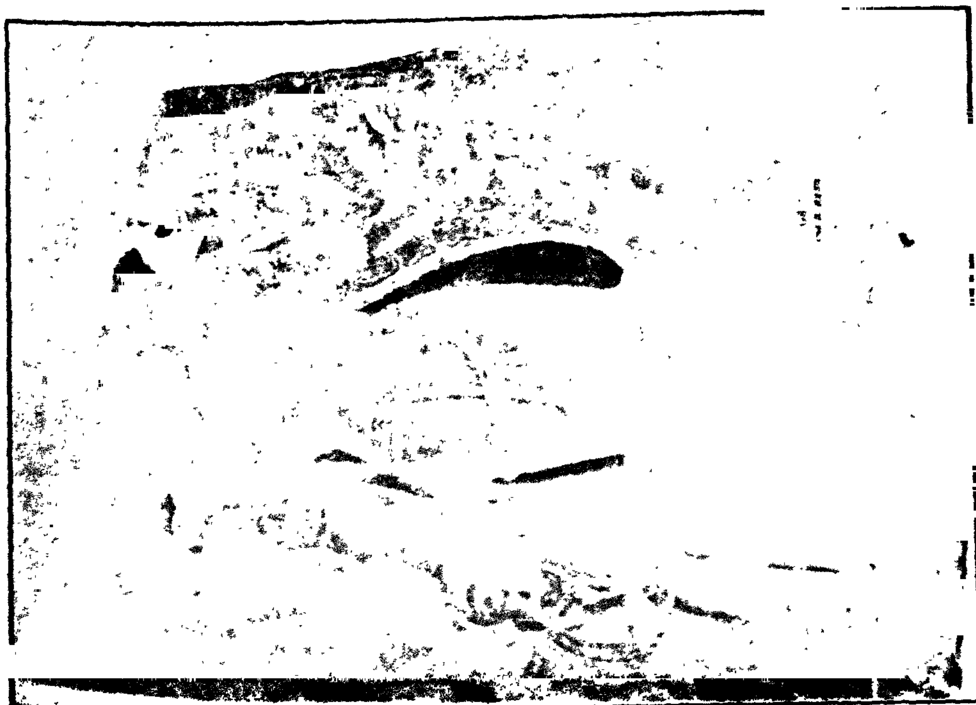
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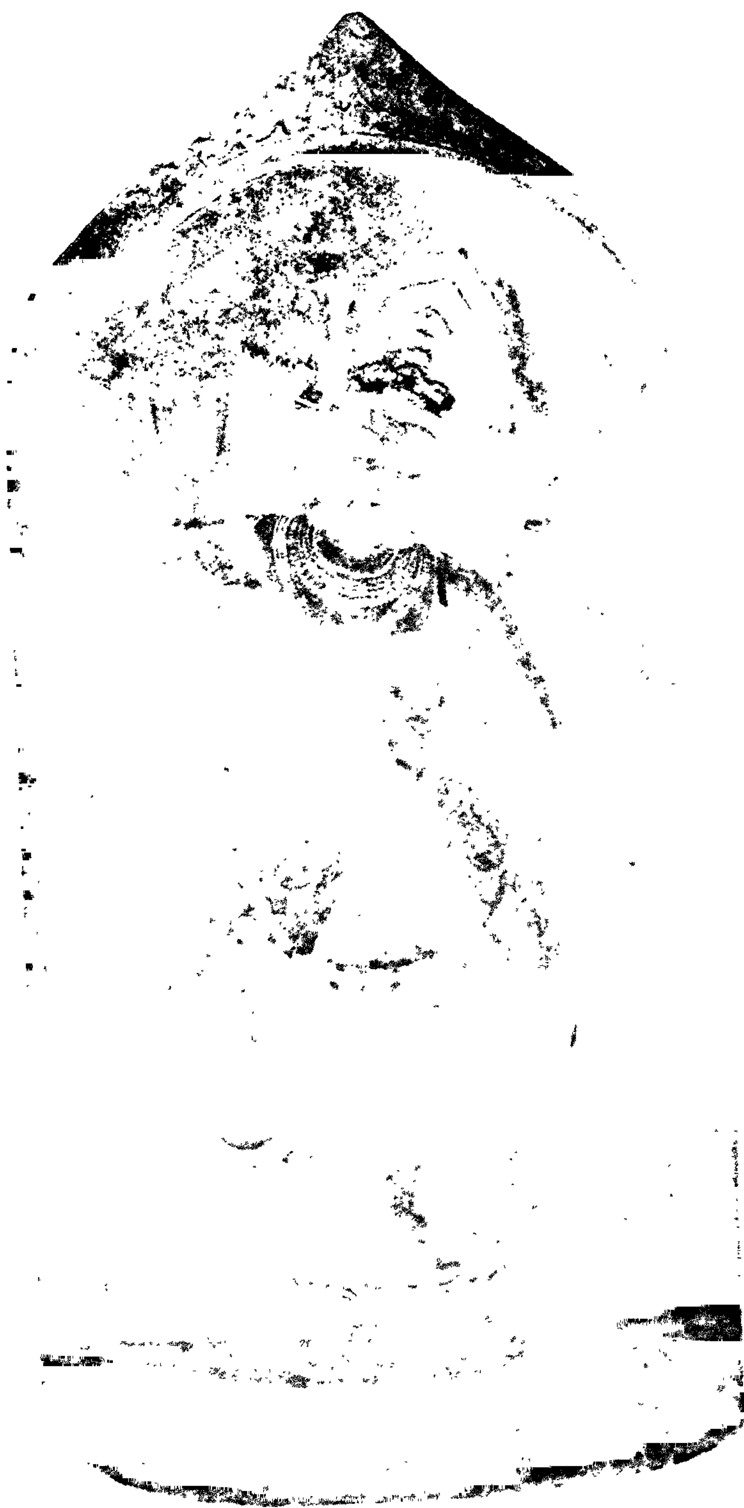
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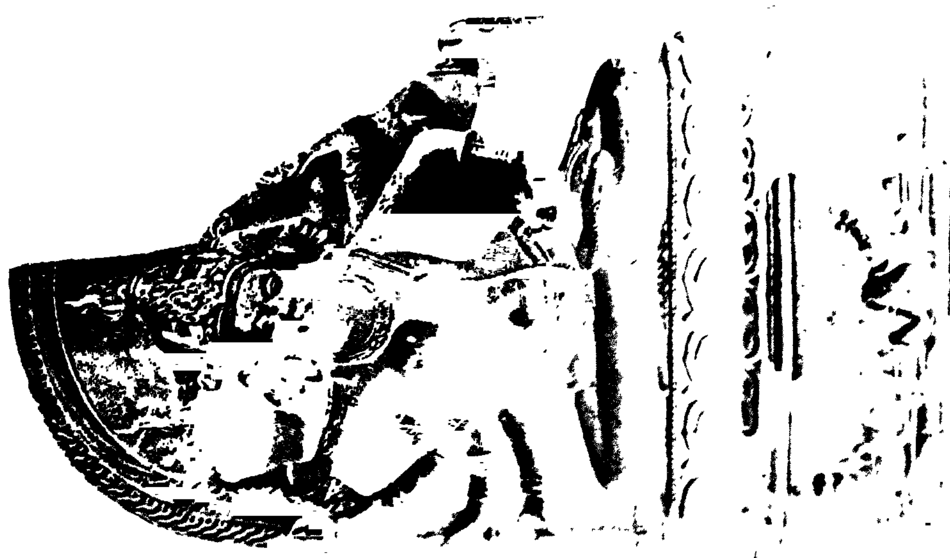
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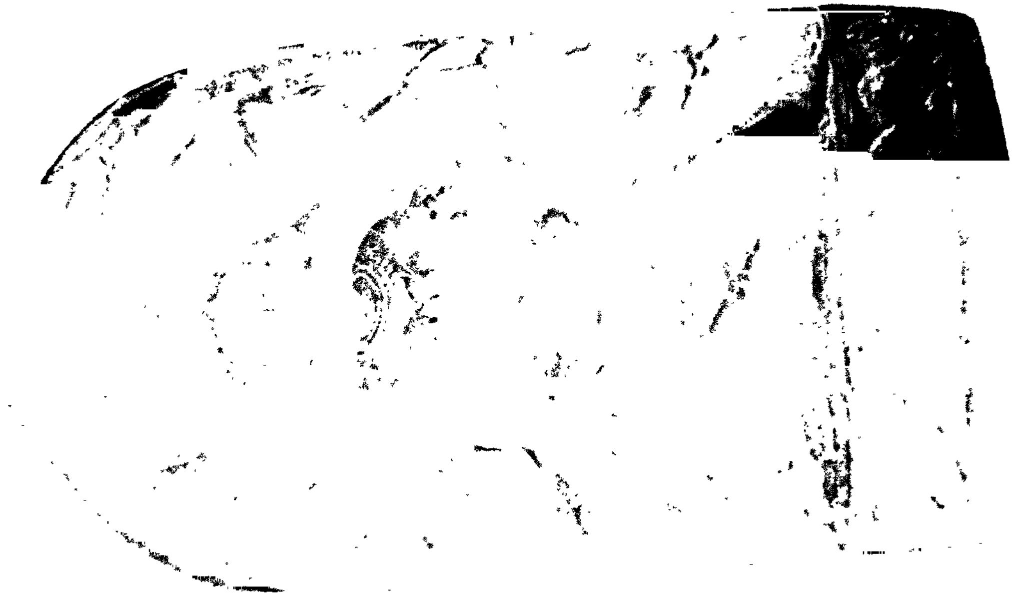
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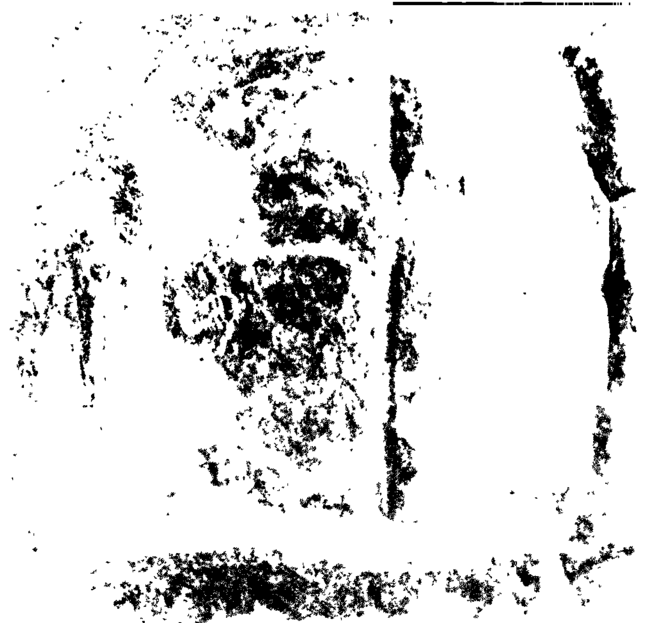


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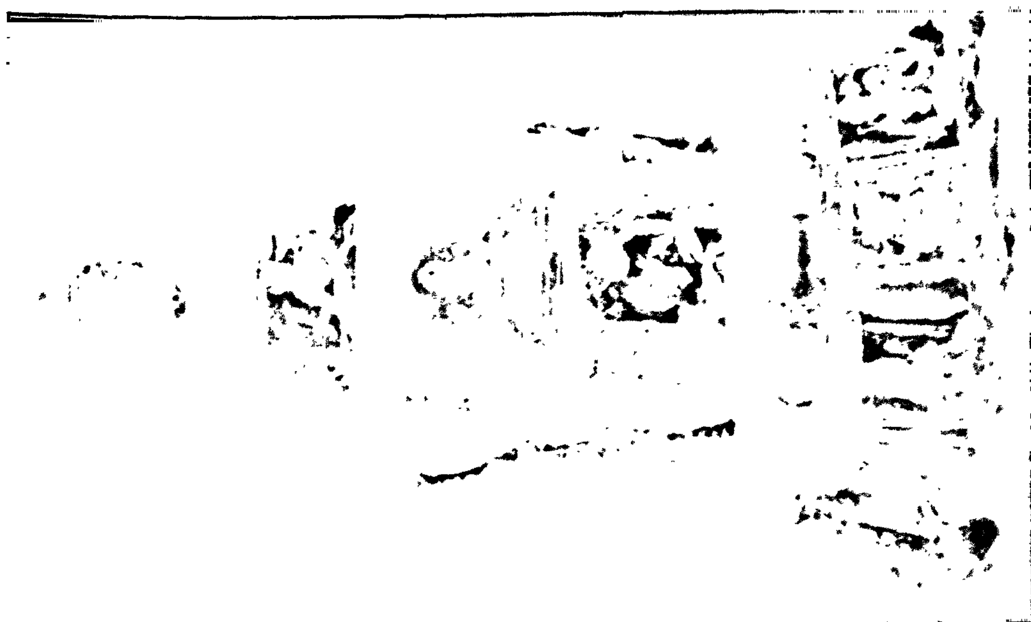


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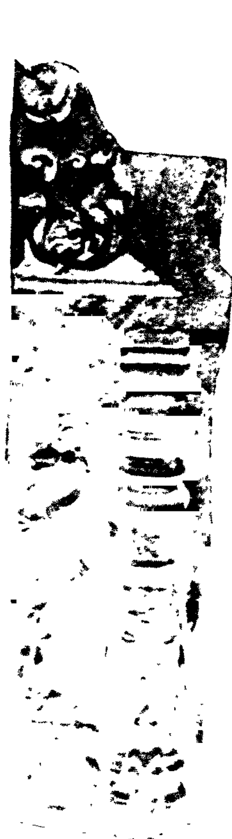


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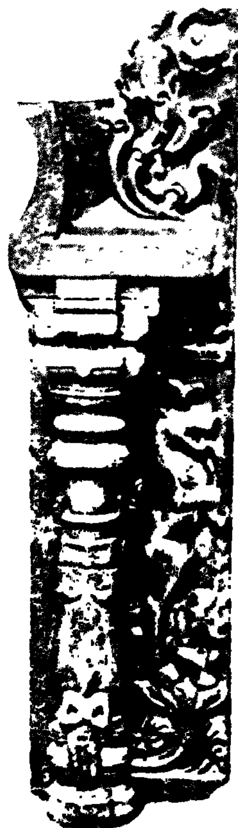
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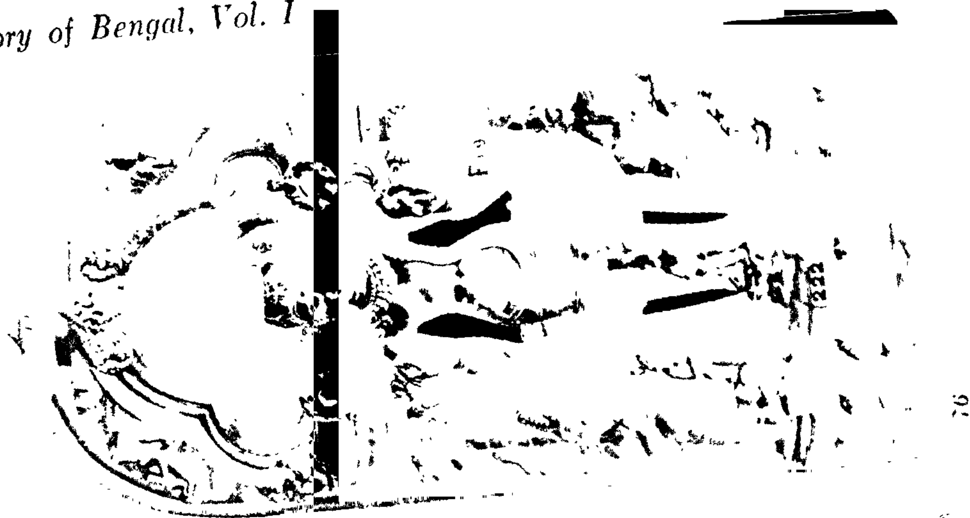
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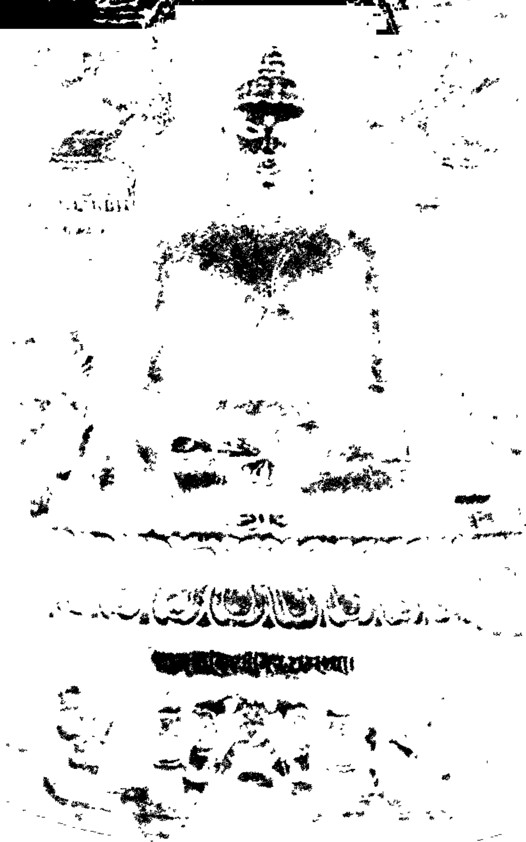
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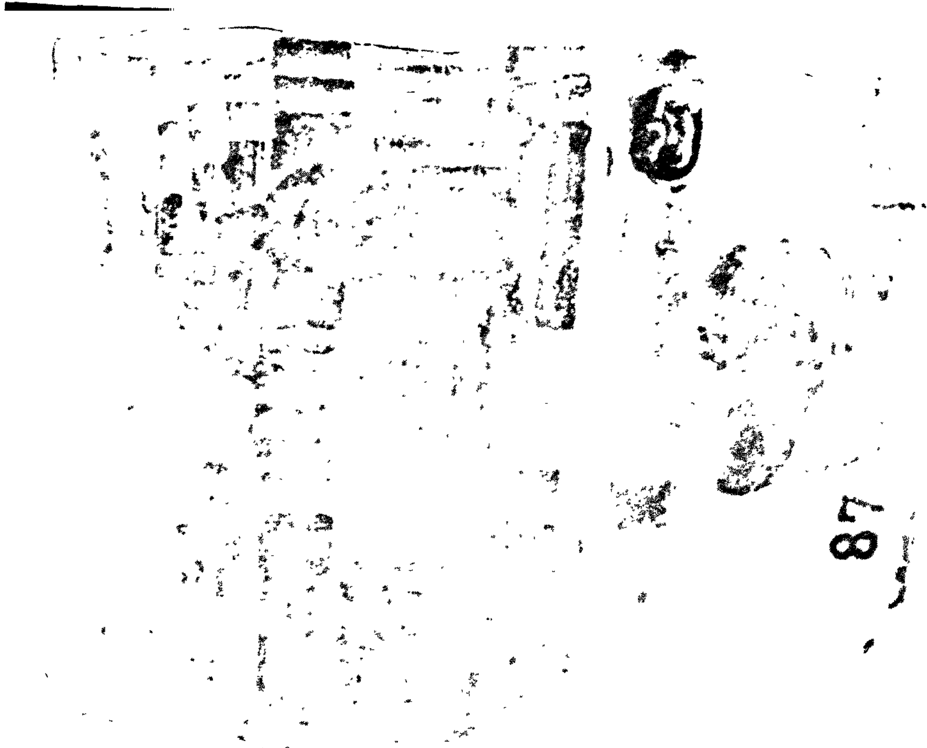


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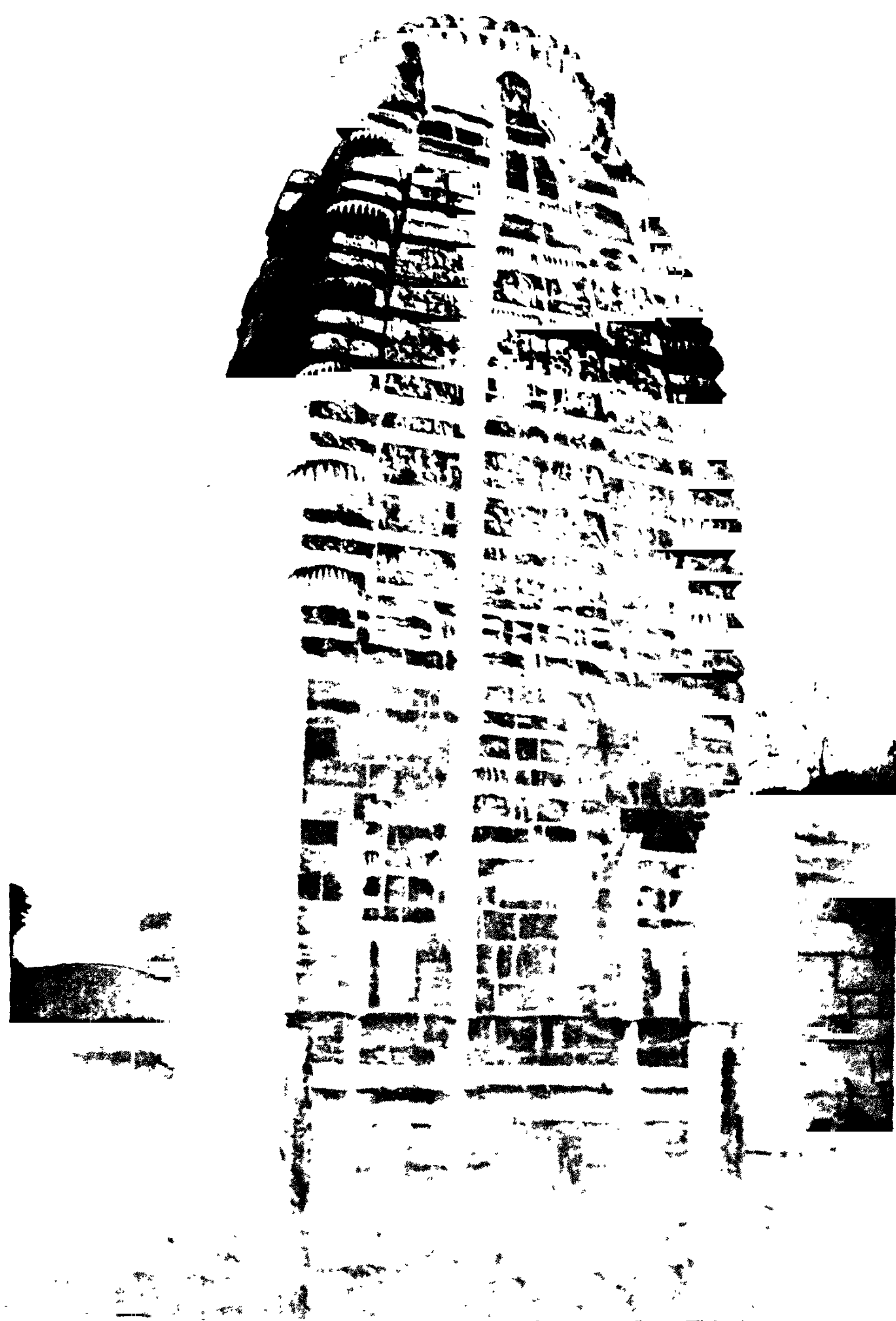
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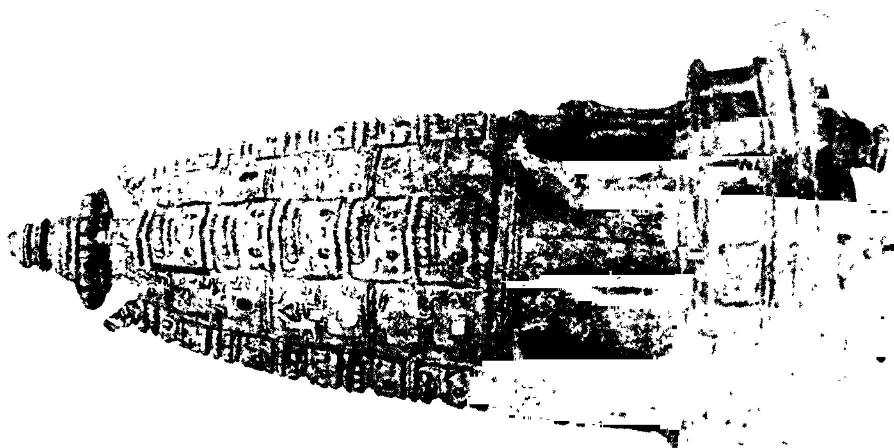
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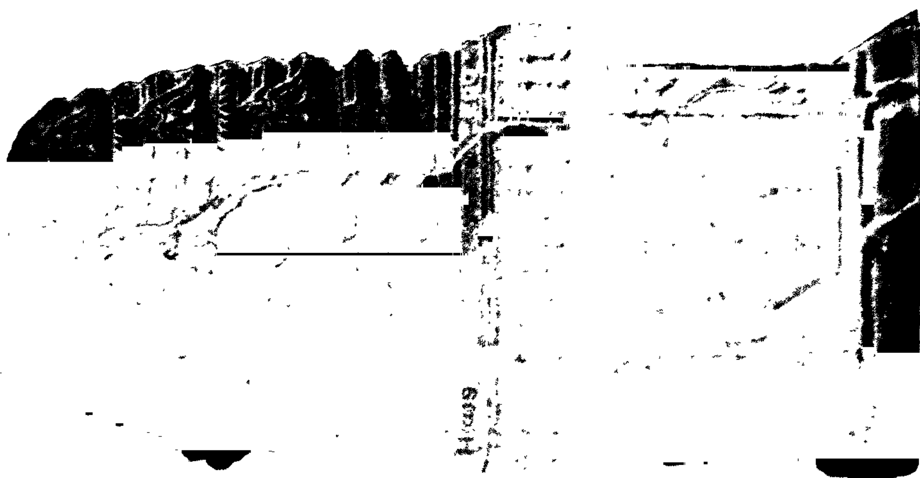
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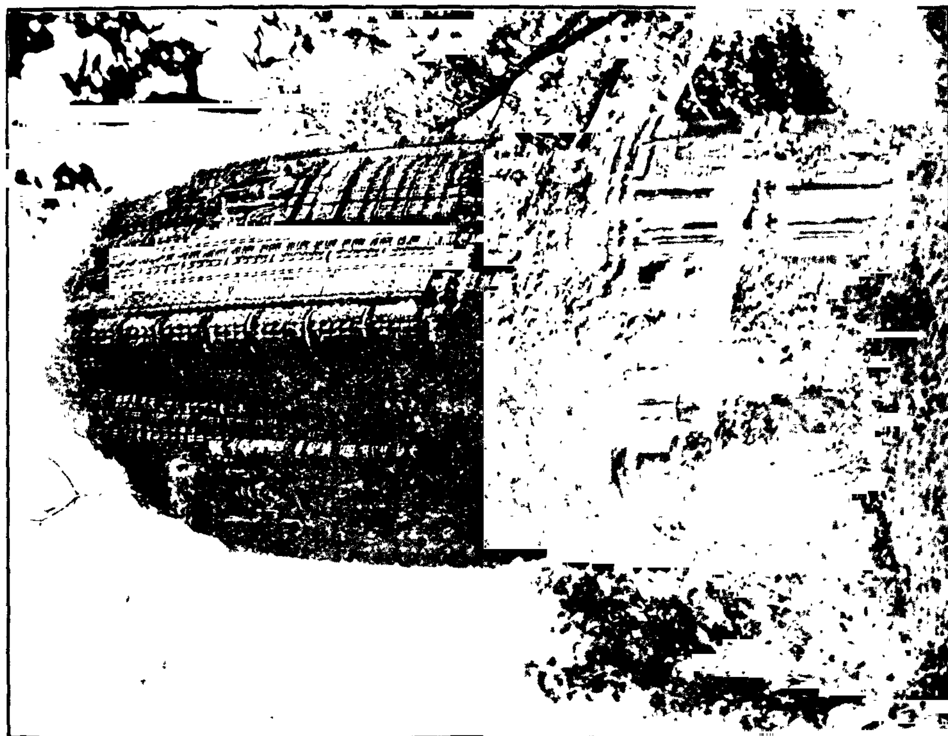


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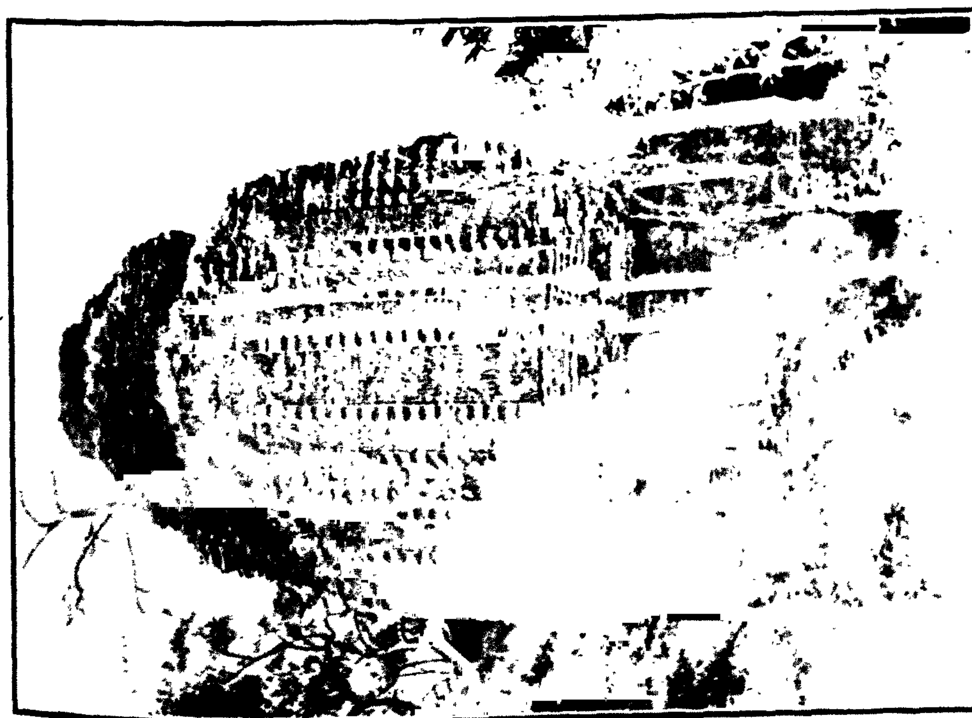




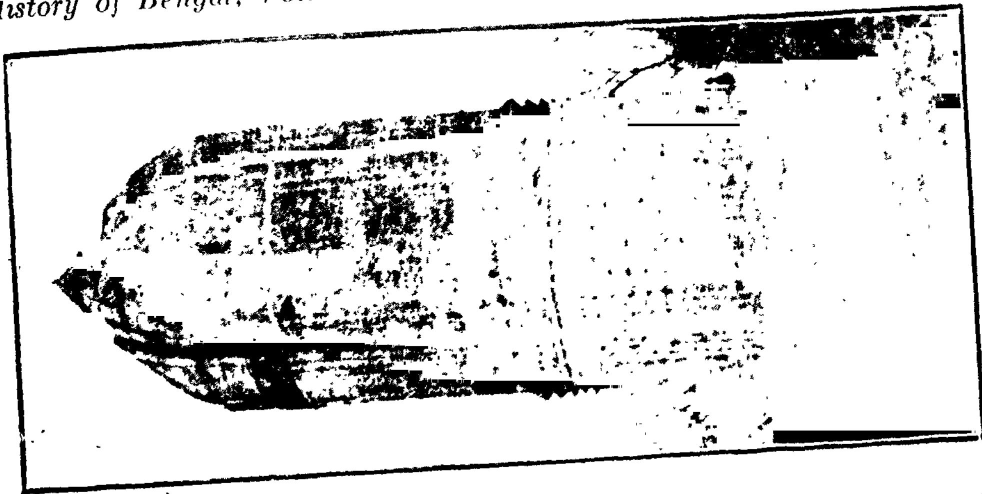




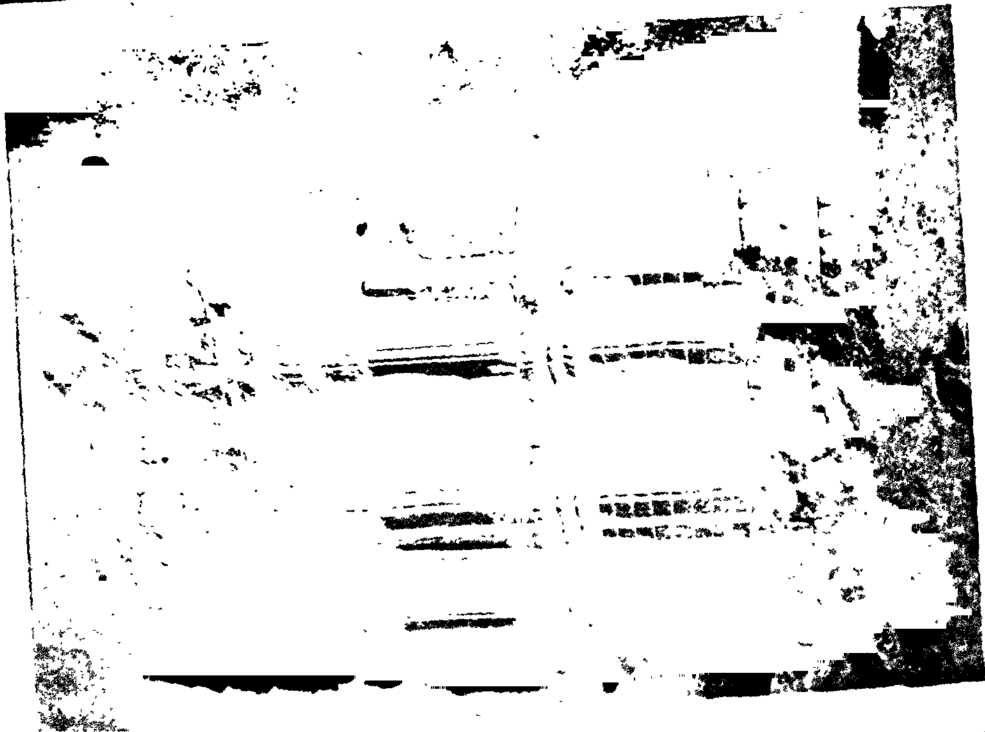
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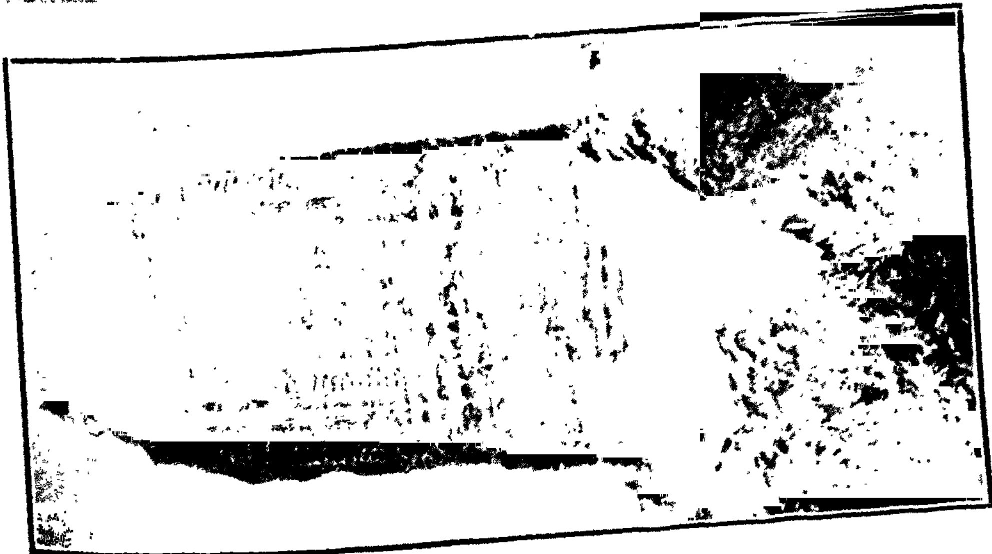
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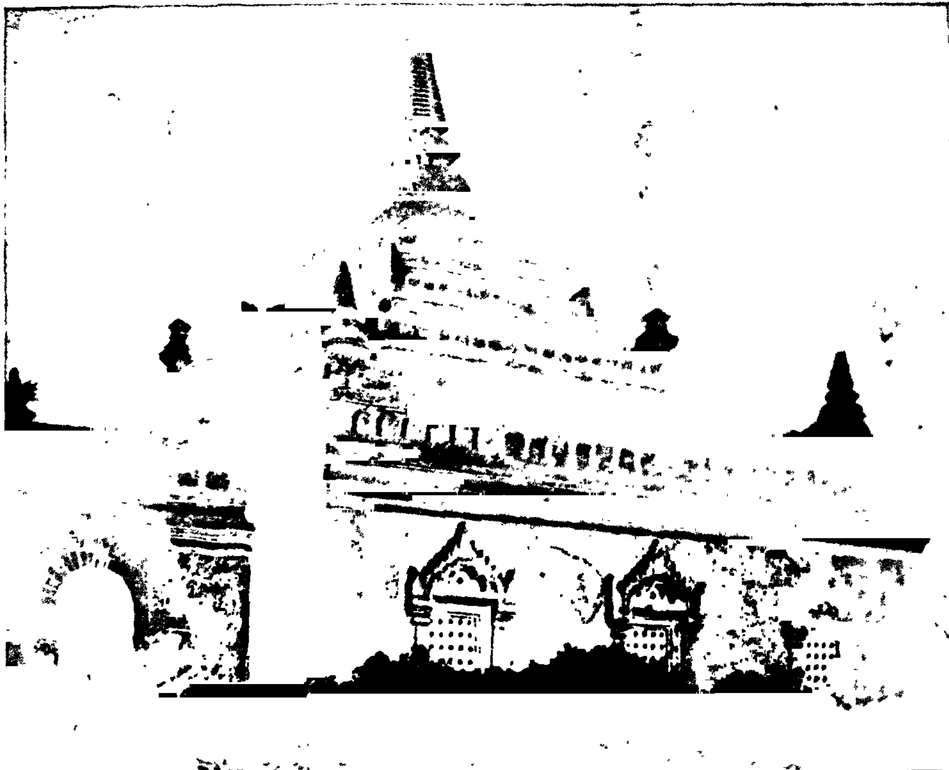
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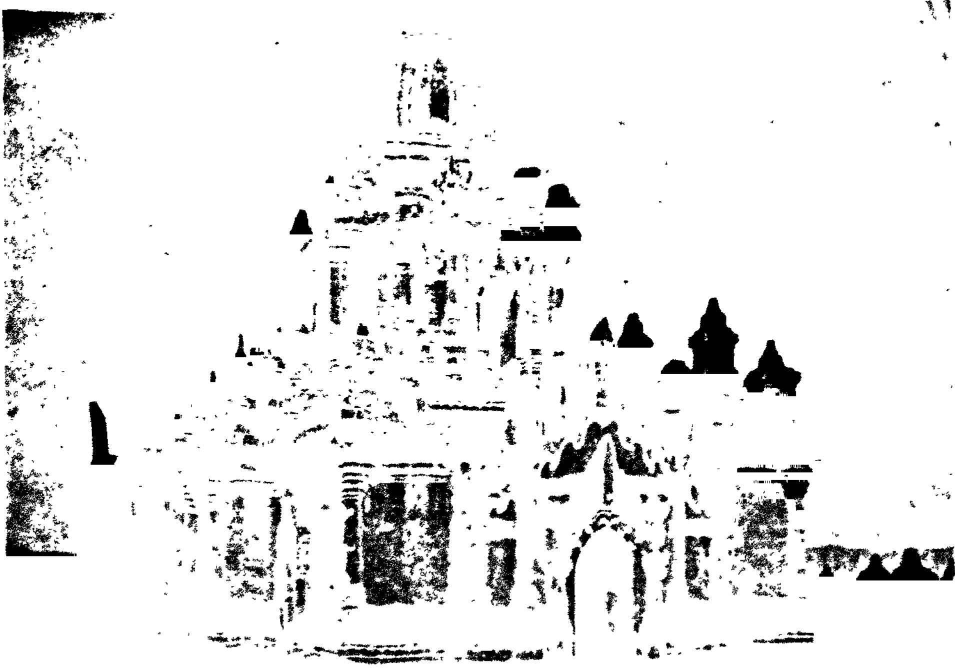
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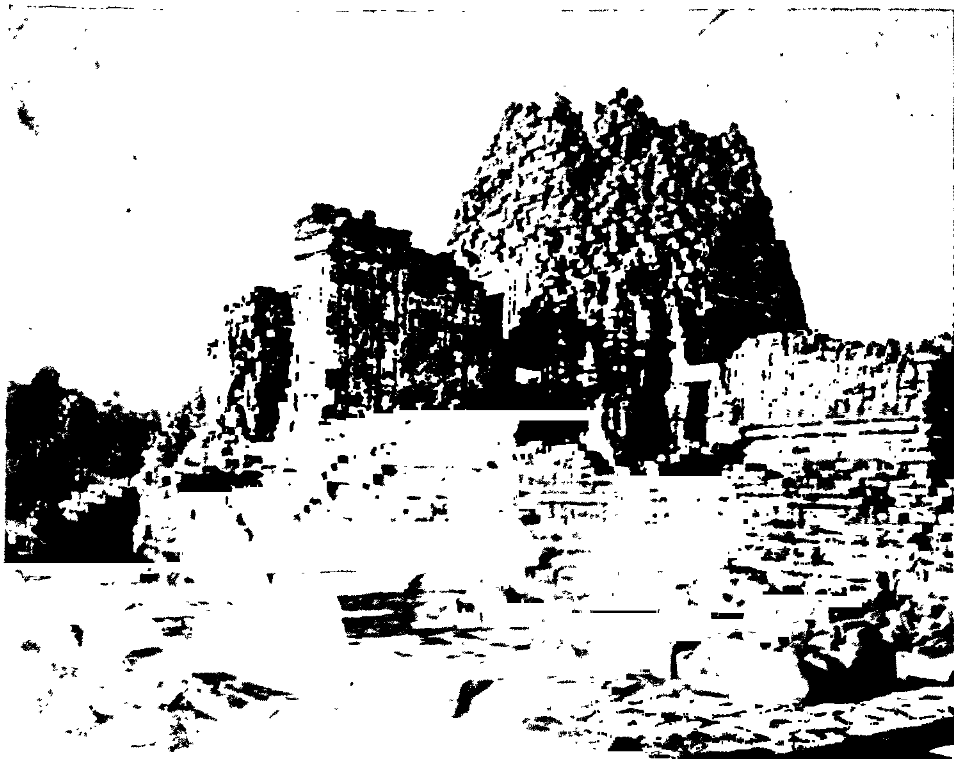


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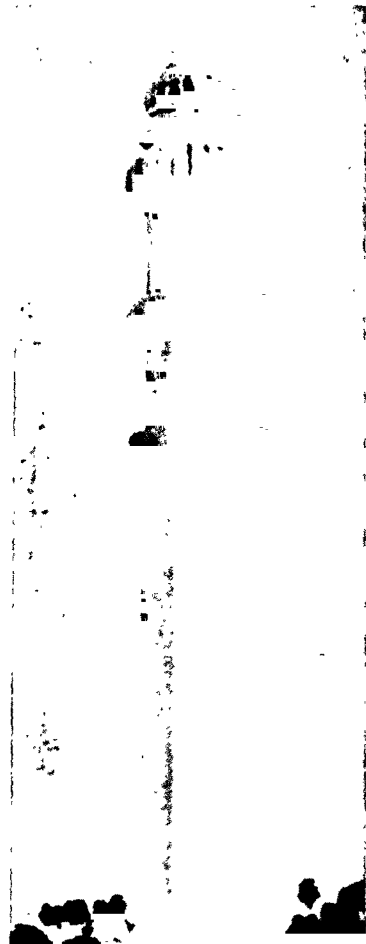
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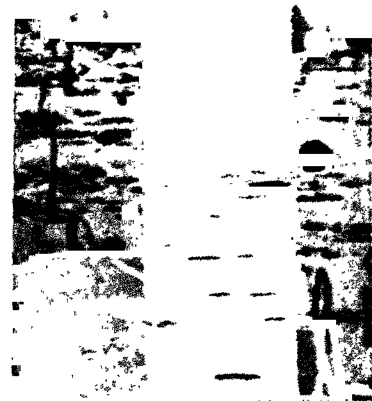


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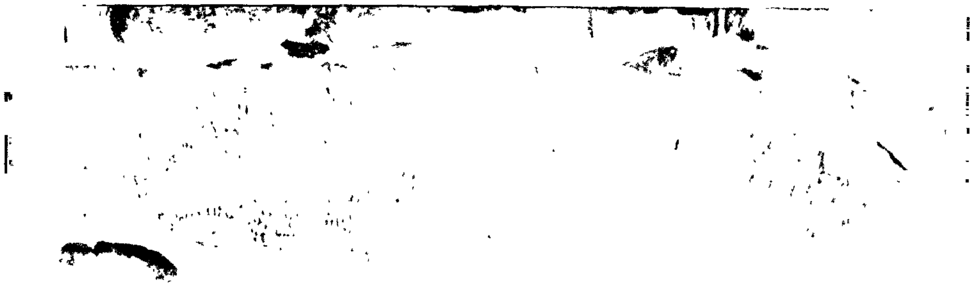
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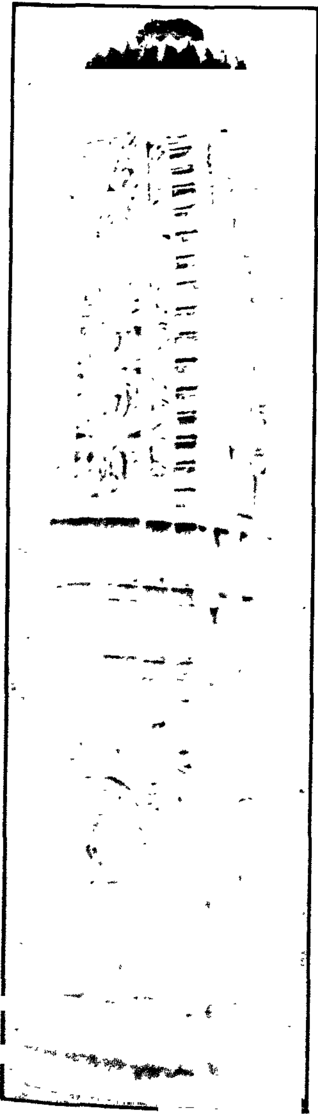

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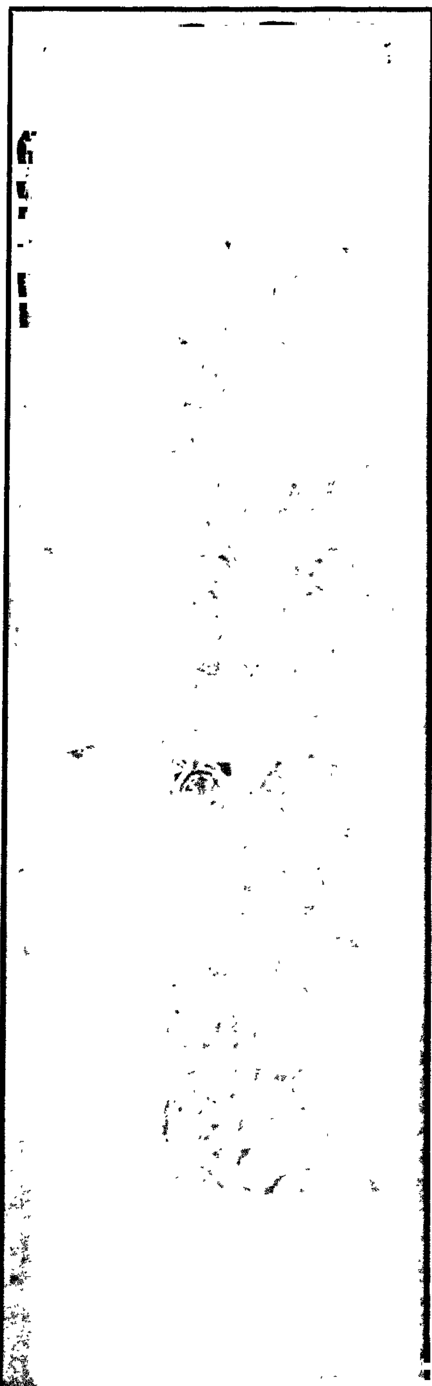
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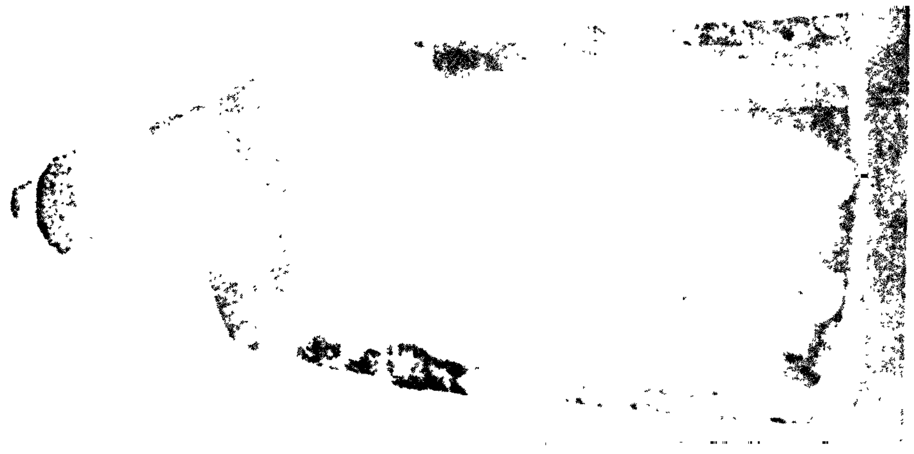
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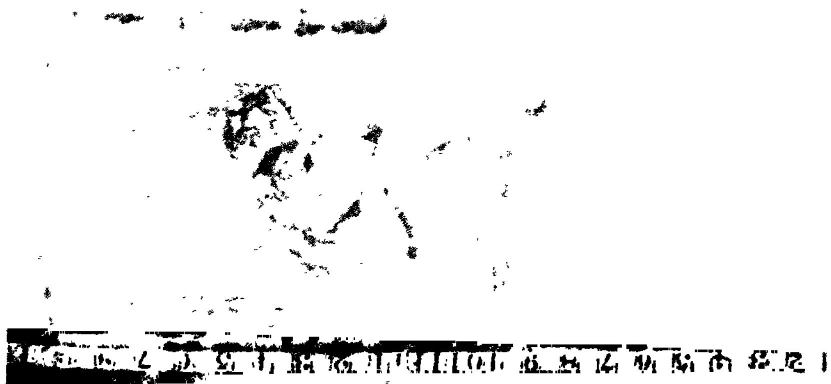
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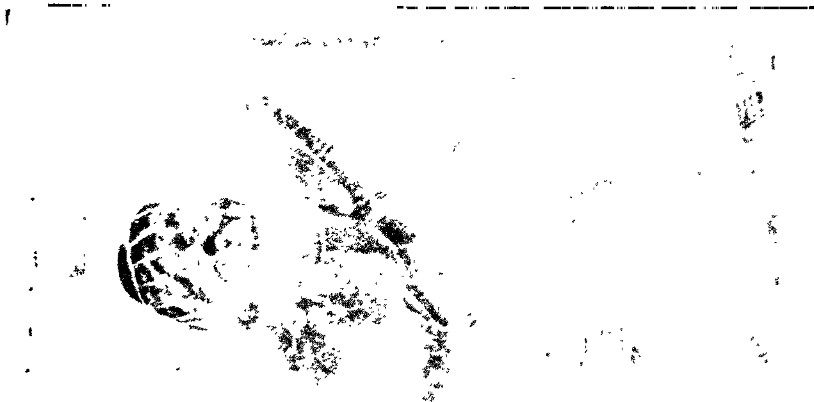


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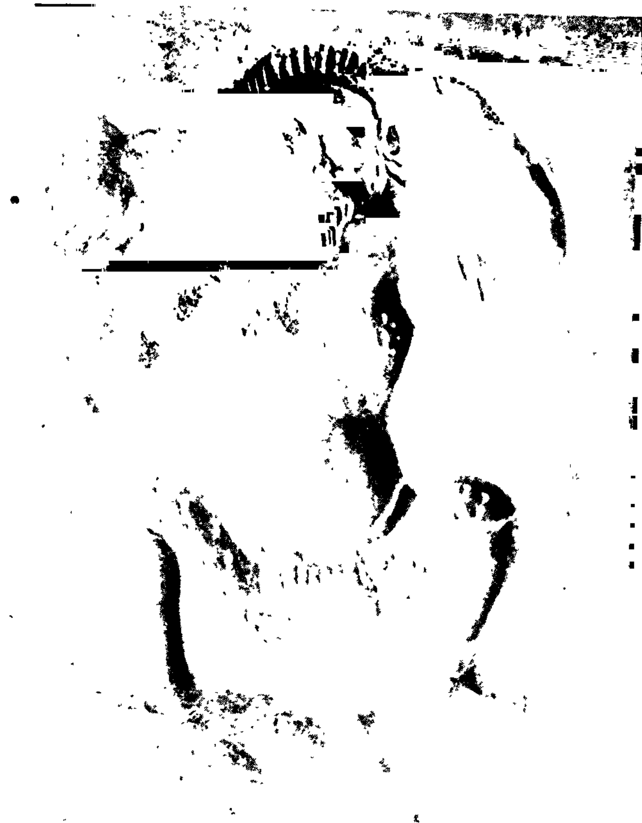
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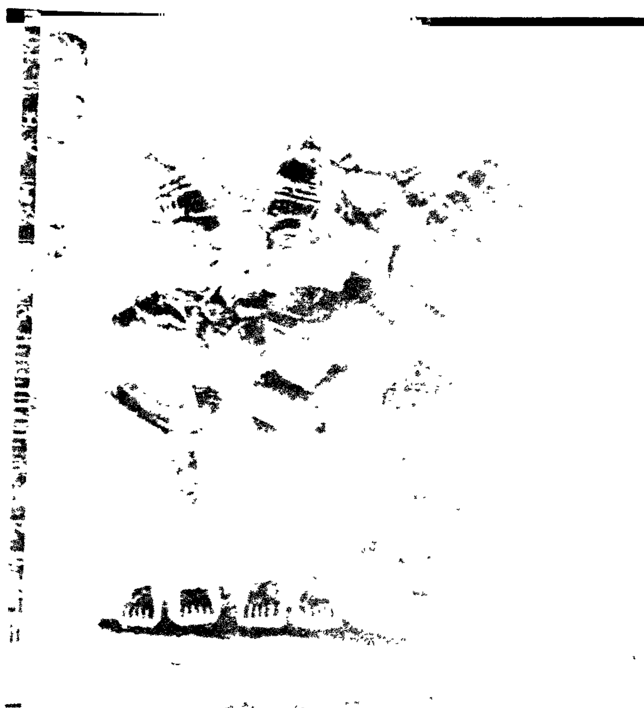
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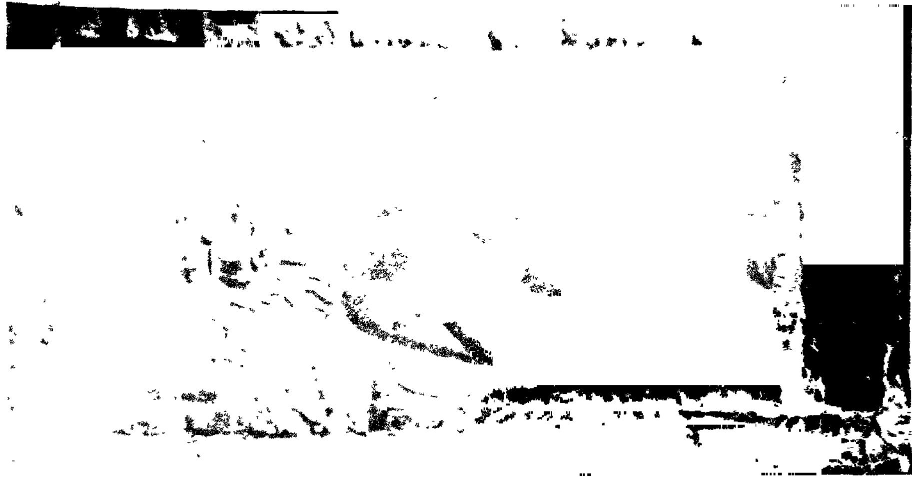
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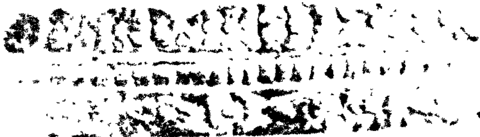


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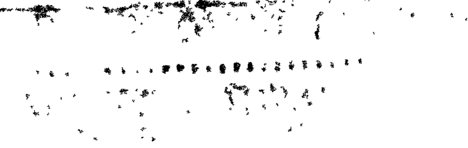


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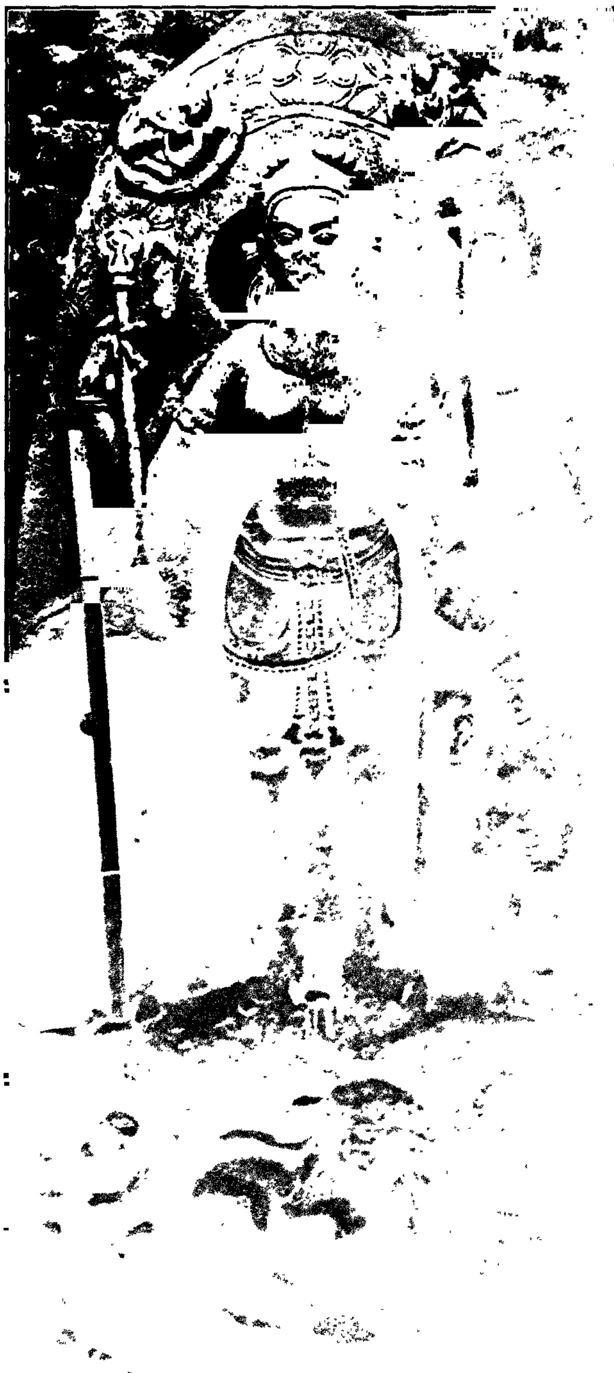
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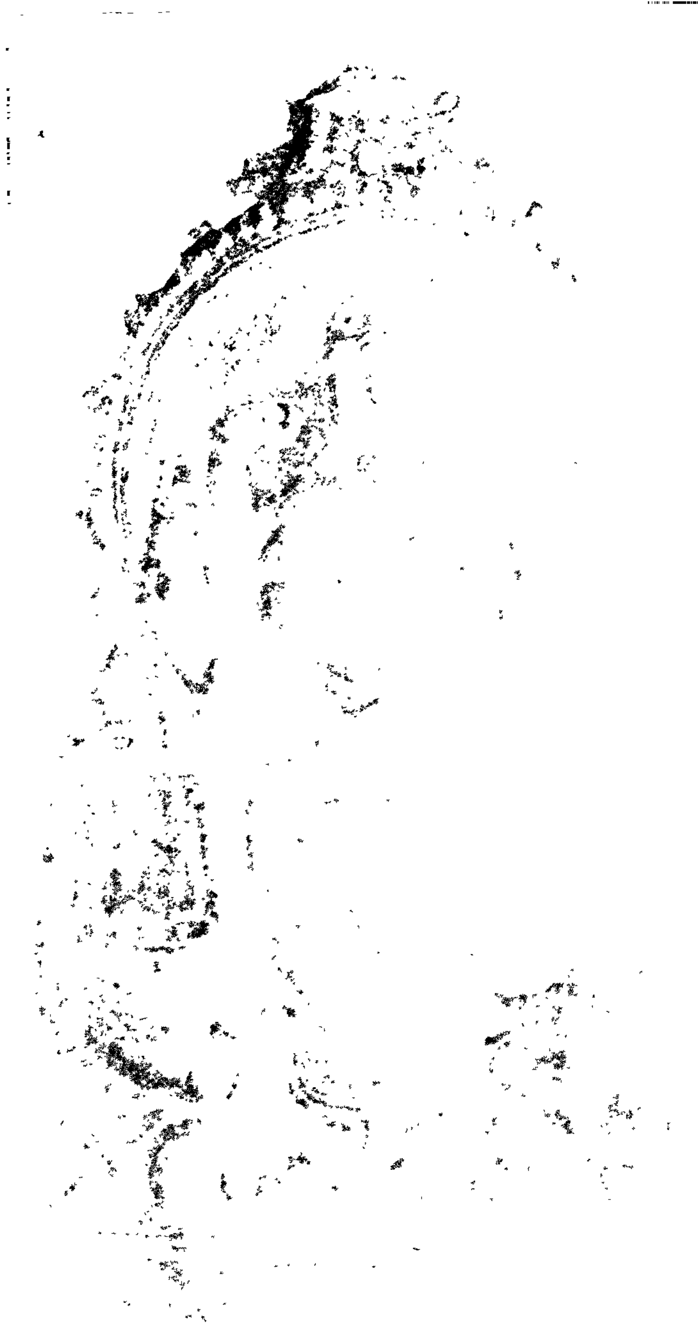
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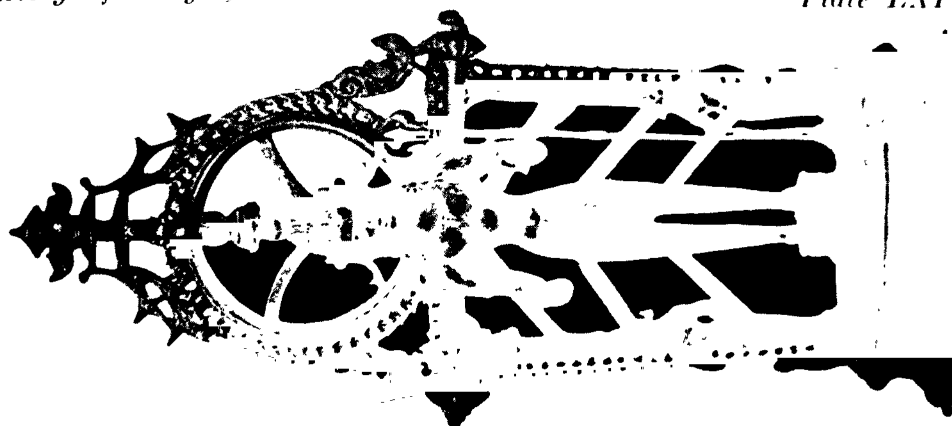
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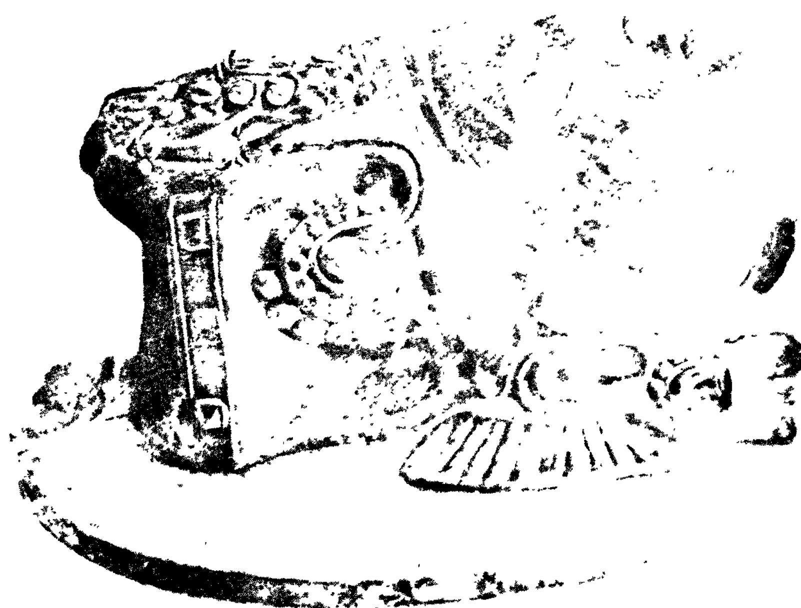
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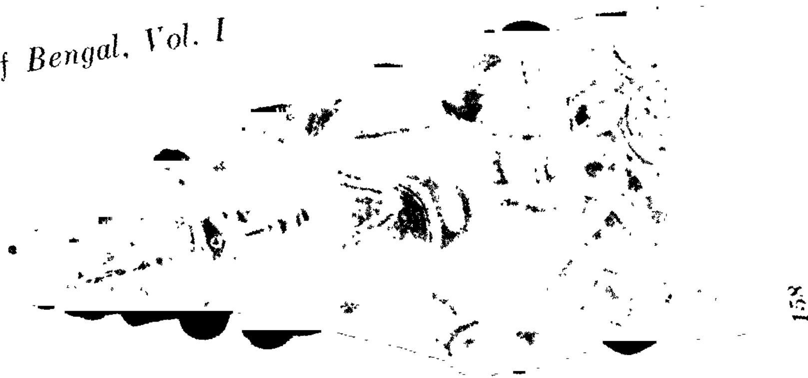
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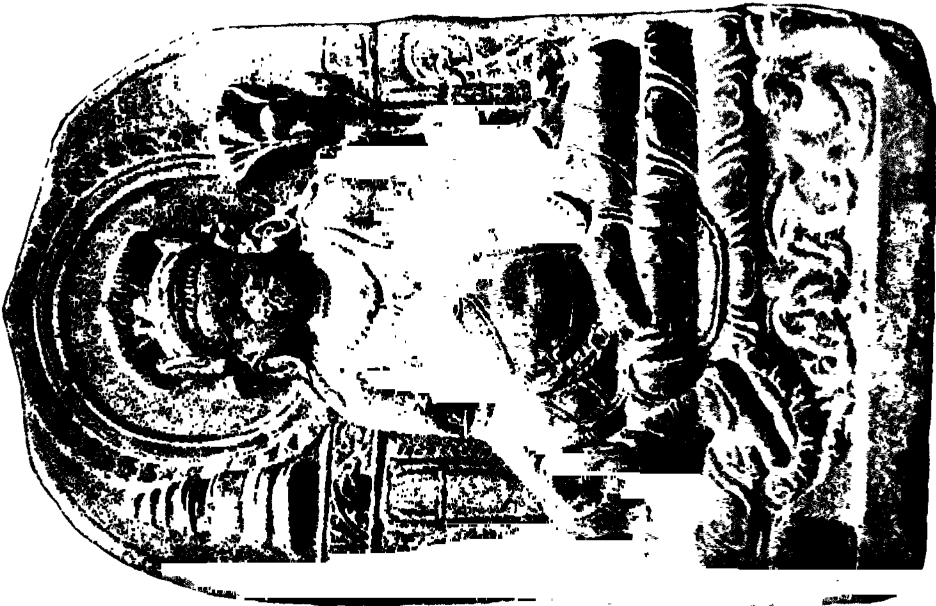
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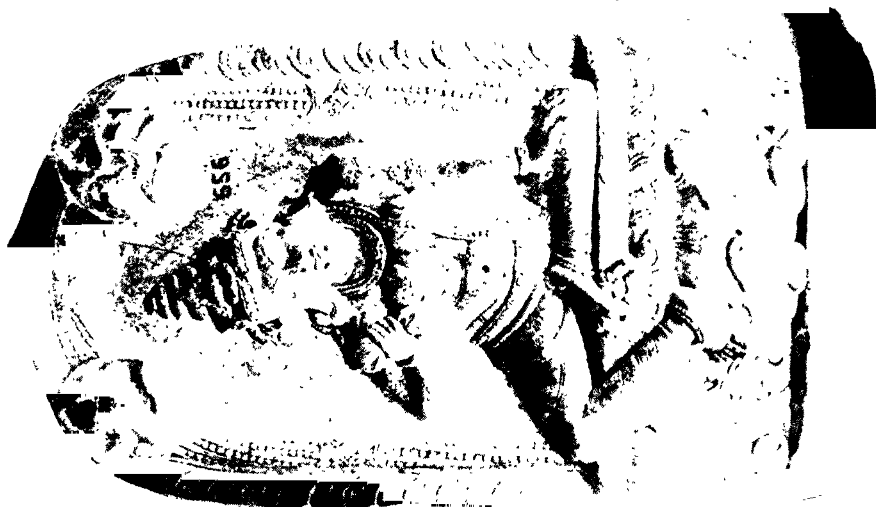


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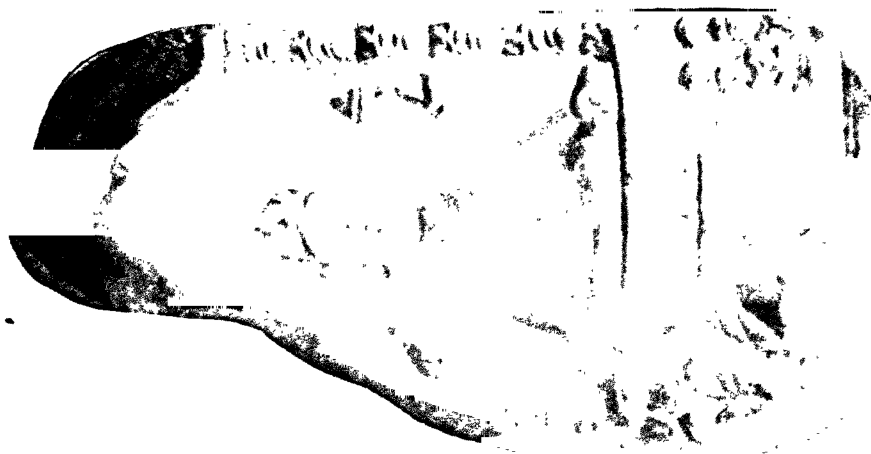
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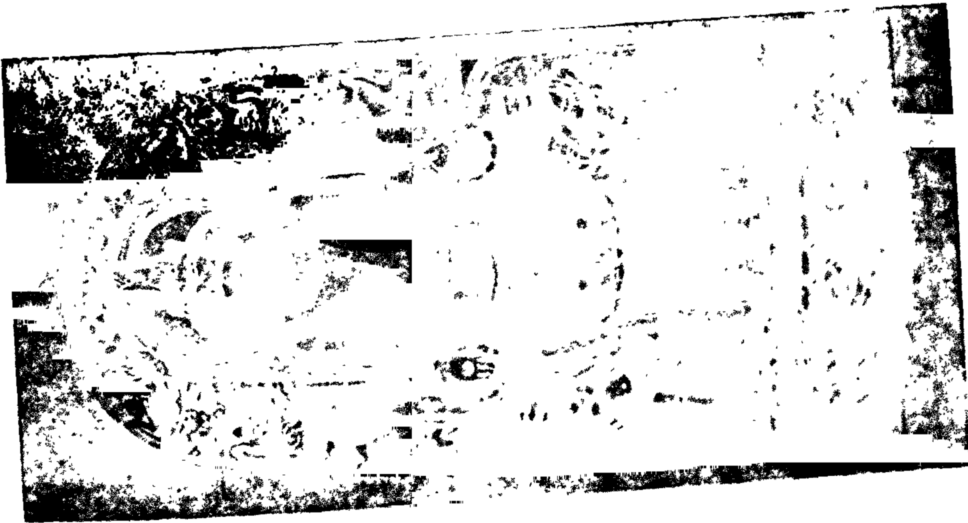
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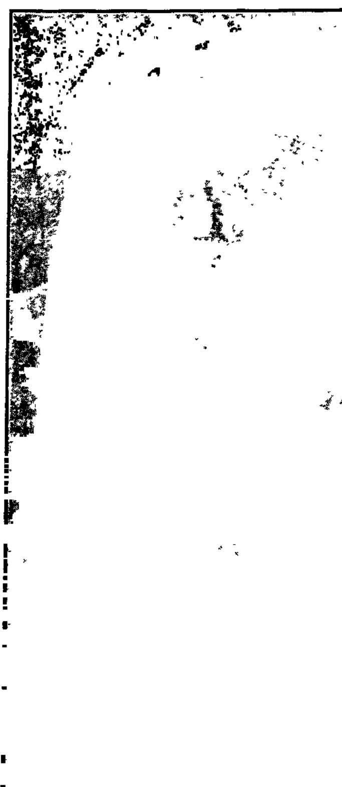


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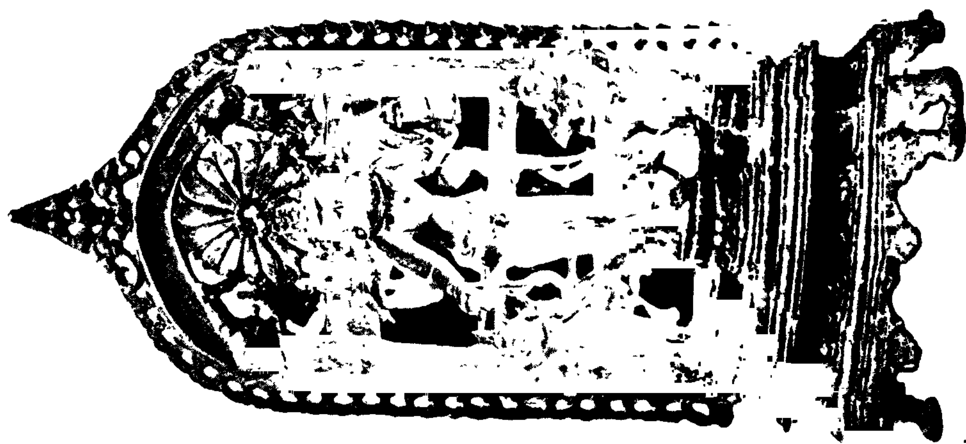
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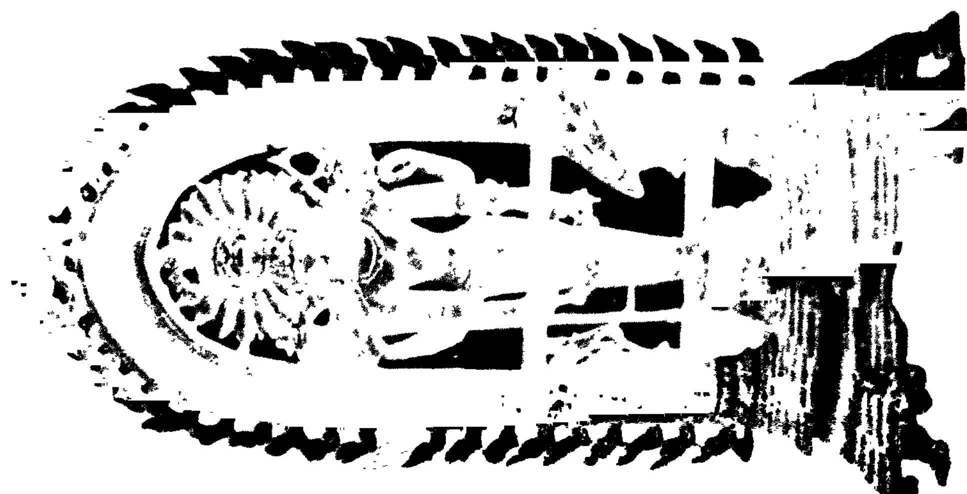
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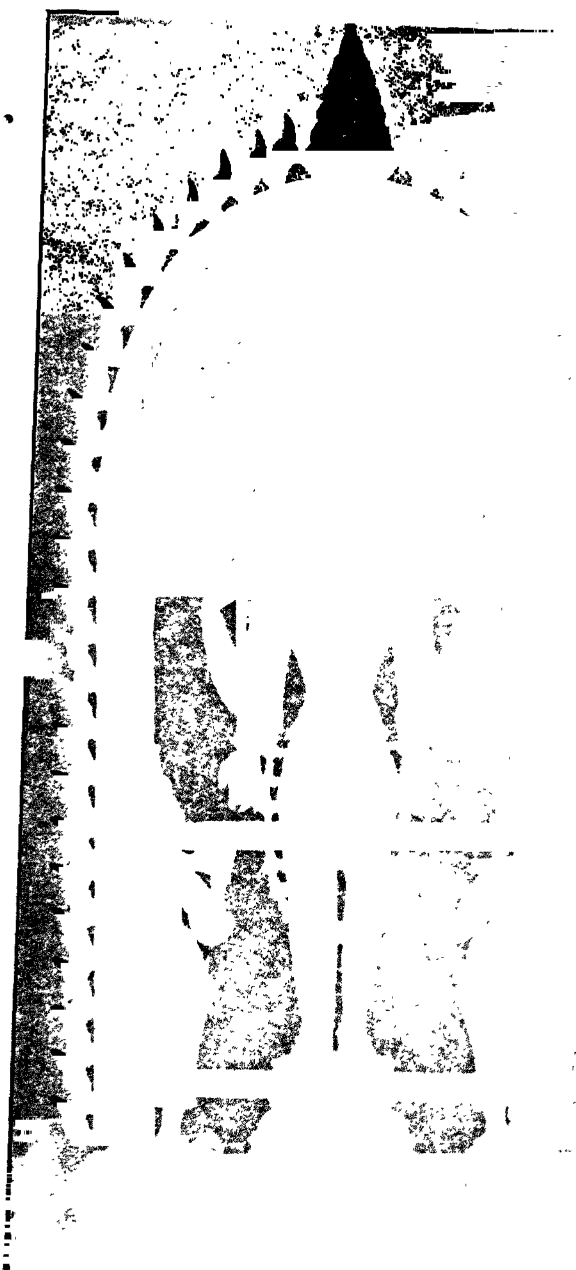

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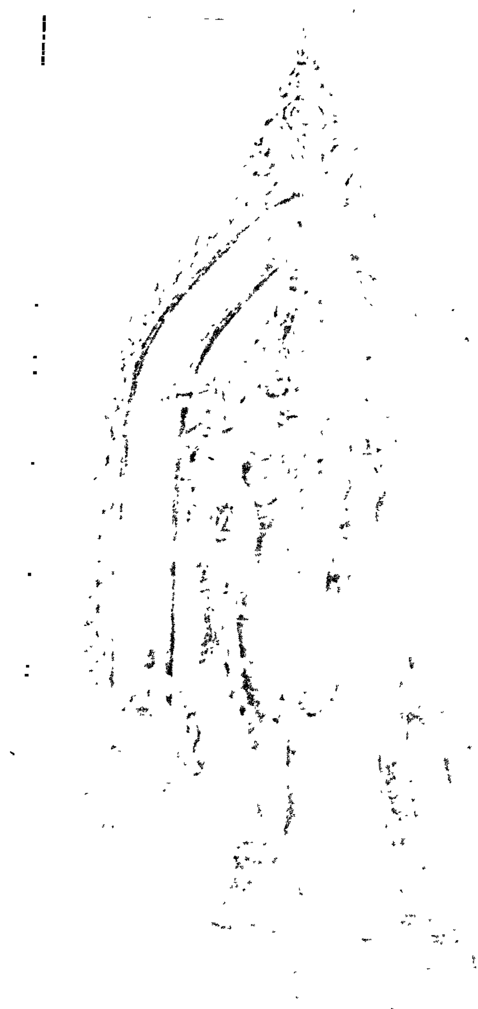

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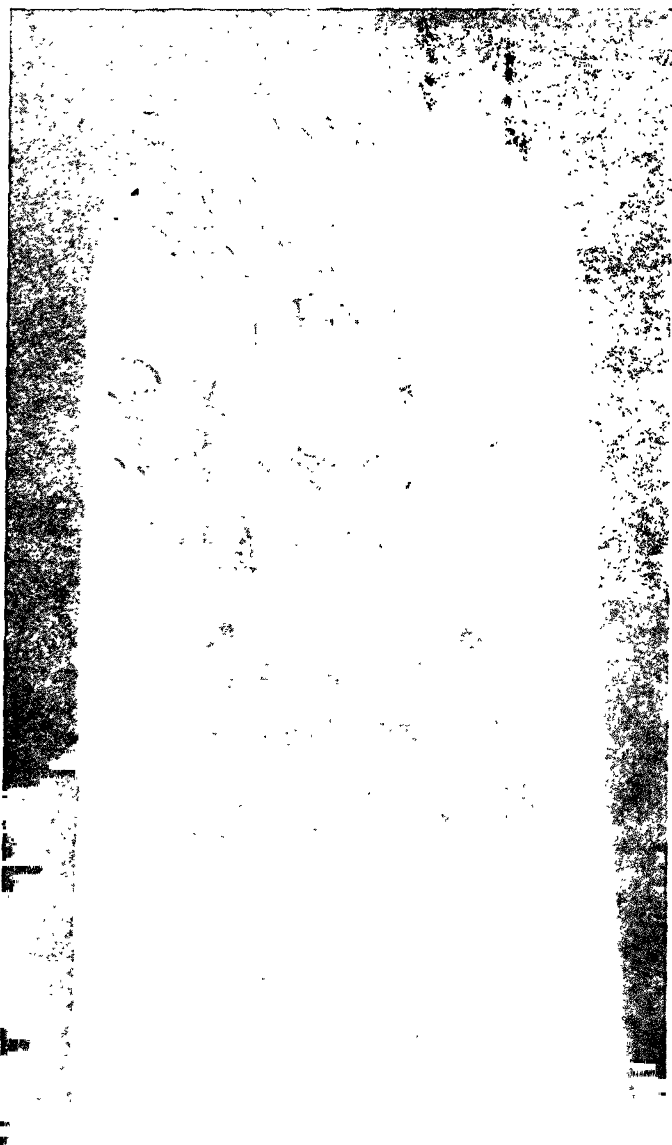


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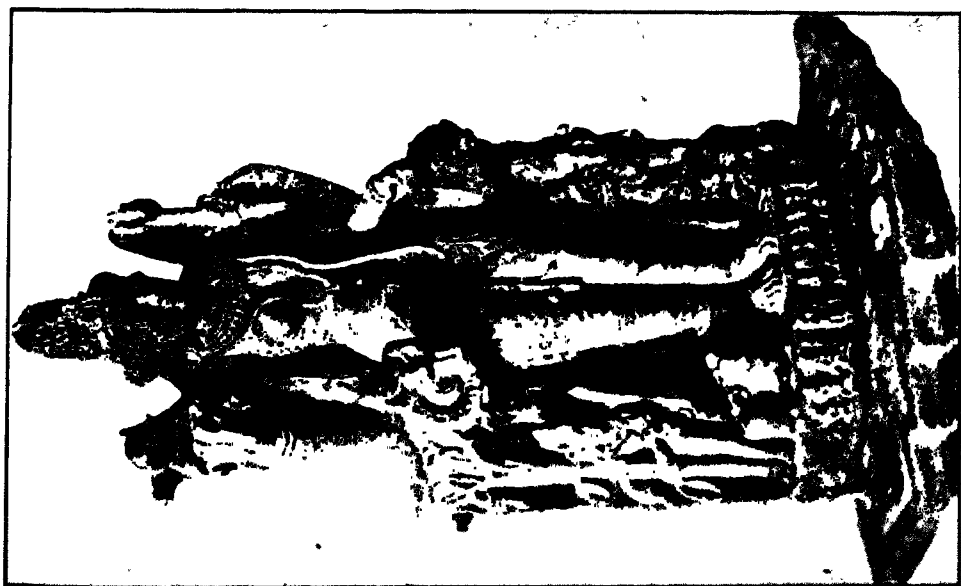




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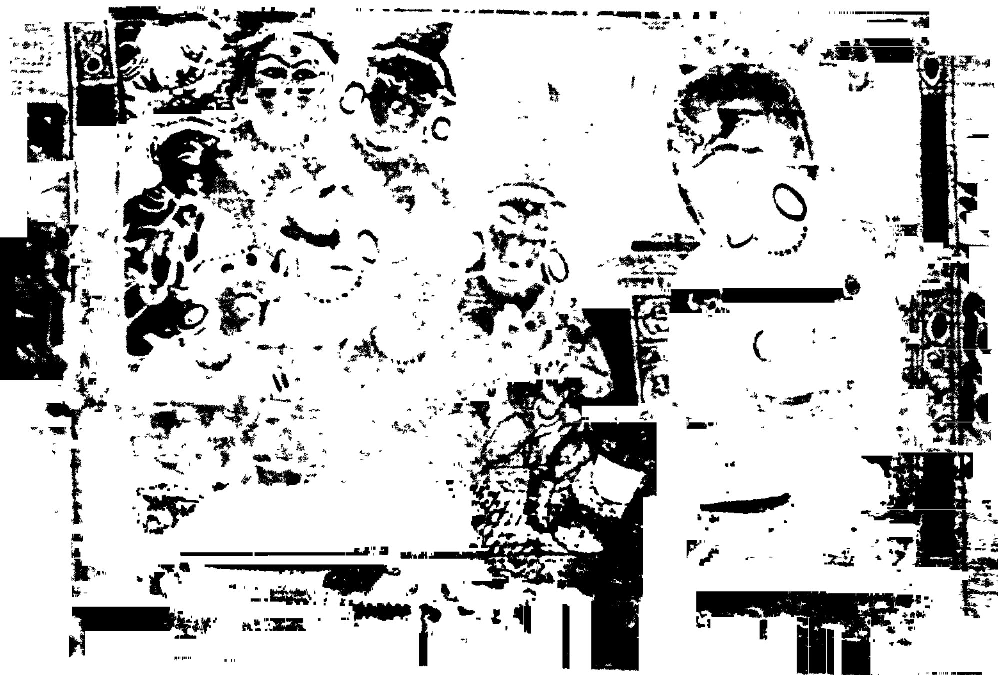


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